



N<sup>o</sup> ADAMS 142.2  
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# JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

35.







T H E  
I L I A D  
O F  
H O M E R.

TRANSLATED BY  
*ALEXANDER POPE*, Esq.

VOLUME THIRD.

Men' moveat cimex Pantilius? Aut crucier, quod  
Vellicat absentem Demetrius? Aut quod ineptus  
Fannius Hermogenis lædat conviva Tigelli?  
Plotius, et Varius, Mæcenas, Virgiliusque,  
Valgius et probet hæc Octavius optimus!      HOR.

L O N D O N,

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M D C C L I X.

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## I L I A D.

## B O O K XIII.

## T H E A R G U M E N T.

The fourth battle continued, in which Neptune assists the Greeks: the acts of Idomeneus.

*NEPTUNE, concerned for the loss of the Grecians, upon seeing the fortification forced by Hector, who had entered the gate near the station of the Ajaxes, assumes the shape of Calchas, and inspires those heroes to oppose him: then in the form of the generals, encourages the other Greeks who had retired to their vessels. The Ajaxes form their troops in a close phalanx, and put a stop to Hector and the Trojans. Several deeds of valour are performed; Meriones losing his spear in the encounter, repairs to seek another at the tent of Idomeneus: this occasions a conversation between those two warriors, who return together to the battle. Idomeneus signalizes his courage above the rest; he kills Othryoneus, Asius, and Alcahous: Deiphobus and Æneas march against him, and at length Idomeneus retires. Menelaus wounds Helenus and kills Pisander. The Trojans are repulsed in the left wing; Hector still keeps his ground against the Ajaxes, till being gauled by the Locrian slingers and archers, Polydamas advises to call a council of war: Hector approves his advice, but goes first to rally the Trojans; upbraids Paris, rejoins Polydamas, meets Ajax again, and renews the attack.*

The eight and twentieth day still continues. The scene is between the Grecian wall and the sea-shore.

**W**HEN now the thund'rer on the sea-beat coast  
 Had fix'd great Hector and his conqu'ring host;  
 He left them to the fates, in bloody fray  
 To toil and struggle through the well-fought day.  
 Then turn'd to Thracia from the field of fight 5  
 Those eyes, that shade insufferable light,  
 To where the Myrians prove their martial force,  
 And hardy Thracians tame the savage horse;  
 And where the far-fam'd Hippemolgian strays,  
 Renown'd for justice and for length of days, 10

v. 5. *Then turn'd to Thracia from the field of fight.*]  
 One might fancy, at the first reading of this passage, that Homer here turned aside from the main view of his poem, in a vain ostentation of learning, to amuse himself with a foreign and unnecessary description of the manners and customs of these nations. But we shall find, upon better consideration, that Jupiter's turning aside his eyes was necessary to the conduct of the work, as it gives an opportunity to Neptune to assist the Greeks, and thereby causes all the adventures of this book. M. Dacier is too refining on this occasion; when she would have it, that Jupiter's *averting his eyes*, signifies his abandoning the Trojans; in the same manner as the scripture represents the Almighty *turning his face* from those whom he deserts. But at this rate, Jupiter turning his eyes from the battle, must desert both the Trojans and the Greeks; and it is evident from the context, that Jupiter intended nothing less than to let the Trojans suffer.

v. 9. *And where the far-fam'd Hippemolgian strays*]  
 There is much dispute among the critics, which are the proper names, and which the epithets in these verses?

Thrice happy race ! that, innocent of blood,  
 From milk, innoxious, seek their simple food :  
 Jove fees delighted ; and avoids the scene  
 Of guilty Troy, of arms, and dying men :  
 No aid he deems to either host is giv'n, 15  
 While his high law suspends the pow'rs of heav'n.

Meantime the \* monarch of the wat'ry main  
 Observ'd the thund'rer, nor observ'd in vain.  
 In Samothracia, on a mountain's brow,  
 Whose waving woods o'erhung the deeps below, 20  
 He fate ; and round him cast his azure eyes,  
 Where Ida's misty tops confus'dly rise ;  
 Below, fair Ilion's glitt'ring spires were seen ;  
 The crouded ships, and fable seas between.

Some making *ἀγανοὶ* the epithet to *ἱππημολγοὶ*, others *ἱππημολγοὶ* the epithet to *ἀγανοὶ* ; and *ἀβιοὶ*, which by the common interpreters is thought only an epithet, is by Strabo and Ammianus Marcellinus made the proper name of a people. In this diversity of opinions, I have chosen that which I thought would make the best figure in poetry. It is a beautiful and moral imagination, to suppose that the long life of the Hippemolgians was an effect of their simple diet, and a reward of their justice : and that the supreme Being, displeased at the continued scenes of human violence and dissension, as it were recreated his eyes in contemplating the simplicity of these people.

It is observable, that the same custom of living on milk is preserved to this day by the Tartars, who inhabit the same country.

\* Neptune.

There, from the crystal chambers of the main,      25  
 Emerg'd, he fate ; and mourn'd the Argives slain,  
 At Jove incens'd, with grief and fury stung,  
 Prone down the rocky steep he rush'd along ;

v. 27. *At Jove incens'd, with grief and fury stung,  
 Prone down the rocky steep he rush'd——]*

Monf. de la Motte has play'd the critic upon this passage a little unadvisedly. “ Neptune, says he, is impatient to assist the Greeks. Homer tells us, that this “ god goes first to seek his chariot in a certain place ; “ next he arrives at another place nearer the camp ; “ there he takes off his horses, and then he locks them “ fast, to secure them at his return. The detail of so “ many particularities no way suits the majesty of a god, “ or the impatience in which he is described.” Another French writer makes answer, that however impatient Neptune is represented to be, none of the gods ever go to war without their arms ; and the arms, chariot, and horses of Neptune were at Ægae. He makes but four steps to get thither ; so that what Monf. de la Motte calls being slow, is swiftness itself. The god puts on his arms, mounts his chariot, and departs ; nothing is more rapid than his course ; he flies over the waters : the verses of Homer in that place run swifter than the god himself. It is sufficient to have ears, to perceive the rapidity of Neptune's chariot in the very sound of those three lines, each of which is entirely composed of dactyles, excepting that one spondee which must necessarily terminate the verse.

Βῆ δ' ἐλάαν ἐπὶ κύματ', ἄταλλε δὲ κήτη' ὑπ' αὐτῷ

Γηθοσύνη δὲ θάλασσα δίστατο, τοὶ δ' ἐπίτεοντο

ῥίμφα μαλ', ἐδ' ὑπένερχε διαίνετο χάλκεος ἄξων.

Fierce as he past, the lofty mountains nod,  
 The forests shake! earth trembled as he trod,  
 And felt the footsteps of th' immortal god.  
 From realm to realm three ample strides he took,  
 And, at the fourth, the distant Ægæe shook.

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v. 29. — *The lofty mountains nod,  
 The forests shake! earth trembled as he trod,  
 And felt the footsteps of the immortal god.*]

Longinus confesses himself wonderfully struck with the sublimity of this passage. That critic, after having blamed the defects with which Homer draws the manners of his gods, adds, that he has much better succeeded in describing their figure and persons. He owns, that he often paints a god such as he is, in all his majesty and grandeur, and without any mixture of mean and terrestrial images; of which he produces this passage as a remarkable instance, and one that had challenged the admiration of all antiquity.

The book of Psalms affords us a description of the like sublime manner of imagery, which is parallel to this. *O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou didst march through the wilderness, the earth shook, the heavens dropped at the presence of God, even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel,* Psalm lxxviii.

v. 32. — *Three ample strides he took.*] This is a very grand imagination, and equals, if not transcends, what he has feigned before of the passage of this god. We are told, that at four steps he reached Ægæe, which supposing it meant of the town of that name in Eubœa, which lay the nighest to Thrace, is hardly less than a degree at each step. One may, from a view of the map, imagine him striding from promontory to promontory, his first step on mount Athos, his second on Pallene, his third upon Pelion, and his fourth in



Far in the bay his shining palace stands,  
 Eternal frame ! not rais'd by mortal hands: 35  
 This having reach'd, his braſs-hoof'd ſteeds he reins,  
 Fleet as the winds, and deck'd with golden manes.  
 Refulgent arms his mighty limbs inſold,  
 Immortal arms, of adamant and gold.  
 He mounts the car, the golden ſcourge applies, 40  
 He ſits ſuperior, and the chariot flies :  
 His whirling wheels the glaſſy ſurface ſweep ;  
 Th' enormous monſters, rolling o'er the deep,

Eubœa. Dacier is not to be forgiven for omitting this miraculous circumſtance, which ſo perfectly agrees with the marvellous air of the whole paſſage, and without which the ſublime image of Homer is not complete.

v. 33. — [*The diſtant Ægeæ ſhook.*] There were three places of this name, which were all ſacred to Neptune ; an iſland in the Ægean ſea, mentioned by Nicotratuſ, a town in Pelopenneſus, and another in Eubœa. Homer is ſuppoſed in this paſſage to ſpeak of the laſt ; but the queſtion is put, why Neptune who ſtood upon a hill in Samothrace, inſtead of going on the left to Troy, turns to the right, and takes a way contrary to that which leads to the army ! This difficulty is ingeniouſly ſolved by the old ſcholiaſt ; who ſays, that Jupiter being now on mount Ida, with his eyes turned towards Thrace, Neptune could not take the direct way from Samothrace to Troy, without being diſcovered by him, and therefore fetches this compaſs to conceal himſelf. Euſtathius is contented to ſay, that the poet made Neptune go ſo far about, for the opportunity of thoſe fine deſcriptions of the palace, the chariot, and the paſſage of this god.

v. 43. [*Th' enormous monſters rolling o'er the deep.*] This deſcription of Neptune riſes upon us ; his paſſage



Gambol around him on the wat'ry way ;  
 And heavy whales in aukward measures play : 45  
 The sea subsiding spreads a level plain,  
 Exults, and owns the monarch of the main ;  
 The parting waves before his courfers fly :  
 The wond'ring waters leave his axle dry.  
 Deep in the liquid regions lies a cave ;  
 Between where Tenedos the surges lave,  
 And rocky Imbrus breaks the rolling wave :  
 There the great ruler of the azure round  
 Stopt his swift chariot, and his steeds unbound,  
 Fed with ambrosial herbage from his hand, 55  
 And link'd their fetlocks with a golden band,  
 Infrangible, immortal : there they stay.  
 The father of the floods pursues his way ;

by water is yet more pompous than that by land. The god driving through the seas, the whales acknowledging him, and the waves rejoicing and making way for their monarch, are full of that marvellous, so natural to the imagination of our author. And I cannot but think the verses of Virgil, in the fifth *Æneid*, are short of his original :

*Coeruleo per summa levis volat æquora curru :  
 Subsidunt undæ, tumidumque sub axe tonanti  
 Sternitur æquor aquis : fugiunt vasto æthere nimbi.  
 Tum variæ comitum facies, immania cete, etc.*

I fancy Scaliger himself was sensible of this, by his passing in silence a passage that lay so obvious to comparison.

Where, like a tempest dark'ning heav'n around,  
 Or fiery deluge that devours the ground, 60  
 Th' impatient Trojans, in a gloomy throng,  
 Embattel'd roll'd, as Hector rush'd along.  
 To the loud tumult and the barb'rous cry,  
 The heav'ns re-echo, and the shores reply ;  
 They vow destruction to the Grecian name, 65  
 And in their hopes, the fleets already flame.

But Neptune, rising from the seas profound,  
 The god whose earthquakes rock the solid ground,  
 Now wears a mortal form ; like Calchas seen,  
 Such his loud voice, and such his manly mien ; 70  
 His shouts incessant ev'ry Greek inspire,  
 But most th'Ajaces, adding fire to fire.

'Tis yours, O warriors, all our hopes to raise ;  
 Oh recollect your ancient worth and praise !  
 'Tis yours to save us, if you cease to fear ; 75  
 Flight, more than shameful, is destructive here.  
 On other works though Troy with fury fall,  
 And pour her armies o'er our batter'd wall ;  
 There, Greece has strength : but this, this part o'erthrown,  
 Her strength were vain ; I dread for you alone. 80

v. 79. ————*This part o'erthrown,*

*Her strength were vain, I dread for you alone.]*

What address, and at the same time, what strength is there in these words ! Neptune tells the two Ajaces, that he is only afraid for their post, and that the Greeks will perish by that gate, since it is Hector who assaults it : at every other quarter, the Trojans will be repuls-

Here Hector rages like the force of fire,  
Vaunts of his gods, and calls high Jove his fire.  
If yet some heav'nly pow'r your breast excite,  
Breathe in your hearts, and string your arms to fight,  
Greece yet may live, her threat'ned fleet maintain, 85  
And Hector's force, and Jove's own aid, be vain.  
Then with his sceptere that the deep controuls,  
He touch'd the chiefs, and steel'd their manly souls:  
Strength, not their own, the touch divine imparts,  
Prompts their light limbs, and swells their daring hearts.  
Then as a falcon from the rocky height, 91  
Her quarry seen, impetuous at the sight

ed. It may therefore be properly said, that the Ajaces only are vanquished, and that their defeat draws destruction upon all the Greeks. I do not think that any thing better could be invented to animate courageous men, and make them attempt even impossibilities. Dacier.

v. 83. *If yet some heav'nly pow'r, &c.*] Here Neptune, considering how the Greeks were discouraged by the knowledge that Jupiter assisted Hector, insinuates that notwithstanding Hector's confidence in that assistance, yet the power of some other god might counter-vail it on the other part; wherein he alludes to his own aiding them, and seems not to doubt his ability of contesting the point with Jove himself. It is with the same confidence he afterwards speaks to Iris, of himself and his power, when he refuses to submit to the order of Jupiter in the fifteenth book. Eustathius remarks, what an incentive it must be to the Ajaces to hear those who could stand against Hector equalled, in this oblique manner, to the gods themselves.

Forth-springing instant, darts herself from high,  
 Shoots on the wing, and skims along the sky :  
 Such, and so swift, the pow'r of ocean flew; 95  
 The wide horizon shut him from their view.

Th' inspiring god, Oileus' active son  
 Perceiv'd the first, and thus to Telamon.

Some god, my friend, some god in human form,  
 Fav'ring descends, and wills to stand the storm. 100  
 Not Calchas this, the venerable seer ;  
 Short as he turn'd, I saw the pow'r appear :

v. 97. *Th' inspiring god, Oileus' active son  
 Perceiv'd the first——*]

The reason has been ask'd, why the lesser Ajax is the first to perceive the assistance of the god? And the ancient solution of this question was very ingenious: they said that the greater Ajax, being slow of apprehension, and naturally valiant, could not be sensible so soon of this accession of strength as the other, who immediately perceived it, as not owing so much to his natural courage.

' v. 102. *Short as he turn'd, I saw the pow'r.*] This opinion, that the majesty of the gods was such that they could not be seen face to face by men, seems to have been generally received in most nations. Spondanus observes, that it might be derived from sacred truth, and founded upon what God says to Moses, in Exodus, chap. 33. ver. 20. 23. *Man shall not see me and live; thou shalt see my back parts, but my face thou shalt not behold.* For the farther particulars of this notion among the heathens, see the notes on lib. I. ver. 268. and on the 5th, ver. 971.

I mark'd his parting, and the steps he trod ;  
His own bright evidence reveals a god.  
Ev'n now some energy divine I share,      105  
And seem to walk on wings, and tread in air !

With equal ardour, Telamon returns,  
My soul is kindled, and my bosom burns ;  
New rising spirits all my force alarm,  
Lift each impatient limb, and brace my arm.      110  
This ready arm, unthinking, shakes the dart ;  
The blood pours back, and fortifies my heart ;  
Singly methinks, yon' tow'ring chief I meet,  
And stretch the dreadful Hector at my feet.

Full of the god that urg'd their burning breast,      115  
The heroes thus their mutual warmth express'd.  
Neptune meanwhile the routed Greeks inspir'd ;  
Who breathless, pale, with length of labours tir'd,  
Pant in the ships ; while Troy to conquest calls,  
And swarms victorious o'er their yielding walls :      120  
Trembling before th' impending storm they lie,  
While tears of rage stand burning in their eye.  
Greece sunk they thought, and this their fatal hour ;  
But breathe new courage as they feel the pow'r.  
Teucer and Leitus first his words excite ;      125  
Then stern Peneleus rises to the fight ;  
Thoas, Deipyrus, in arms renown'd,  
And Merion next, th' impulsive fury found ;  
Last Nestor's son the same bold ardour takes,  
While thus the god the martial fire awakes.      130

Oh lasting infamy ! oh dire disgrace  
 To chiefs of vig'rous youth, and manly race !  
 I trusted in the gods, and you, to see  
 Brave Greece victorious, and her navy free ;  
 Ah no — the glorious combate you disclaim, 135  
 And one black day clouds all her former fame.  
 Heav'ns ! what a prodigy these eyes survey,  
 Unseen, unthought, till this amazing day !  
 Fly we at length from Troy's oft-conquer'd bands ?  
 And falls our fleet by such inglorious hands ? 140

v. 131. *The speech of Neptune to the Greeks.*] After Neptune, in his former discourse to the Ajaces, who yet maintained a retreating fight, had encouraged them to withstand the attack of the Trojans ; he now addresses himself to those, who, having fled out of the battle, and retired to the ships, had given up all for lost. These he endeavours to bring again to the engagement, by one of the most noble and spirited speeches of the whole Iliad. He represents that their present miserable condition was not to be imputed to their want of power, but to their want of resolution to withstand the enemy, whom by experience they had often found unable to resist them. But what is particularly artful, while he is endeavouring to prevail upon them, is, that he does not attribute their present dejection of mind to a cowardly spirit, but to a resentment and indignation of their general's usage of their favourite hero Achilles. With the same softening art, he tells them, he scorns to speak thus to cowards, but is only concerned for their misbehaviour as they are the bravest of the army. He then exhorts them for their own sake to avoid destruction, which would certainly be inevitable, if for a moment longer they delayed to oppose so imminent a danger.



A rout undisciplin'd, a straggling train,  
 Not born to glories of the dusty plain ;  
 Like frightened fawns from hill to hill pursu'd,  
 A prey to ev'ry savage of the wood :  
 Shall these, so late who trembled at your name,      145  
 Invade your camps, involve your ships in flame ?  
 A change so shameful, say, what cause has wrought ?  
 The soldiers baseness, or the general's fault ?  
 Fools ! will ye peril for your leader's vice ?  
 The purchase infamy, and life the price !      150  
 'Tis not your cause, Achilles injur'd fame :  
 Another's is the crime, but yours the shame.  
 Grant that our chief offend through rage or lust,  
 Must you be cowards, if our king's unjust ?  
 Prevent this evil, and your country save :      155  
 Small thought retrieves the spirits of the brave.

v. 141. *A rout undisciplin'd, etc.*] I translate this line,

*“Αυτως ἡλάσκεισθαι, ἀνάλκιδες, ἔδ’ ἐπὶ χάριμῃ,*

with allusion to the want of military discipline among the Barbarians, so often hinted at in Homer. He is always opposing to this, the exact and regular disposition of his Greeks, and accordingly, a few lines after, we are told that Grecian phalanxes were such, that Mars or Minerva could not have found a defect in them.

v. 155. *Prevent this evil, etc.*] The verse in the original,

*Ἄλλ’ ἀκεάμεθα θῶσσον, ἀκεφαί τοι φρένες ἐσθλῶν,*

may be capable of receiving another sense to this effect.

Think, and subdue ! on dastards dead to fame  
 I waste no anger, for they feel no shame :  
 But you, the pride, the flow'r of all our host  
 My heart weeps blood to see your glory lost ! 160  
 Nor deem this day, this battle, all you lose ;  
 A day more black, a fate more vile, ensues.  
 Let each reflect, who prizes fame or breath,  
 On endless infamy, on instant death.  
 For lo ! the fated time, th' appointed shoar ; 165  
 Hark ! the gates burst, the brazen barriers roar !  
 Impetuous Hector thunders at the wall ;  
 The hour, the spot, to conquer, or to fall.

These words the Grecians fainting hearts inspire,  
 And list'ning armies catch the godlike fire. 170  
 Fix'd at his post was each bold Ajax found,  
 With well-rang'd squadrons strongly circled round :

“ If it be your resentment of Agamemnon's usage of A-  
 “ chilles, that with-holds you from the battle,” *that e-  
 vil, (viz. the dissention of those two chiefs) may soon  
 be remedied, for the minds of good men are easily calm-  
 ed and compos'd.* I had once translated it.

*Their future strife with speed we shall redress,  
 For noble minds are soon compos'd to peace.*

But upon considering the whole context more attentively,  
 the other explanation, which is that of Didymus, ap-  
 peared to me the more natural and unforced, and I have  
 accordingly followed it.

v. 172. *Fix'd at his post was each bold Ajax found,*  
 etc.] We must here take notice of an old story, which  
 however groundless and idle it seems, is related by Plu-



So close their order, so dispos'd their fight,  
As Pallas' self might view with fixt delight ;

tarch, Philoſtratus, and others. “ Ganiſtor the ſon  
“ of Amphidamas king of Eubœa, celebrating with  
“ all ſolemnity the funeral of his father, proclaimed  
“ according to cuſtom ſeveral public games, among  
“ which was the prize for poetry. Homer and Heſiod  
“ came to diſpute for it. After they had produced  
“ ſeveral pieces on either ſide, in all which the audi-  
“ ence declared for Homer, Panides, the brother of  
“ the deceased, who ſate as one of the judges, order-  
“ ed each of the contending poets to recite that part  
“ of his works which he eſteemed the beſt. Heſiod  
“ repeated thoſe lines which make the beginning of his  
“ ſecond book,

Πληϊάδων ἀτλαγνέων ἐπιτελλομένων,  
“ Ἀρχεσθ’ ἀμήτεσσι δρότοις τὰ δυστομενάων, etc.

“ Homer answered with the verſes which follow here :  
“ but the prince preferring the peaceful ſubject of He-  
“ ſiod to the martial one of Homer ; contrary to the  
“ expectation of all, adjudged the prize to Heſiod.”  
The commentators upon this occaſion are very rhetor-  
ical, and univerſally exclaim againſt ſo crying a piece  
of injuſtice : all the hardeſt names which learning can  
furniſh, are very liberally beſtowed upon poor Panides.  
Spondanus is mighty ſmart, calls him Midas, takes him  
by the ear, and aſks the dead prince as many inſulting  
queſtions, as any of his author's own heroes could have  
done. Dacier with all gravity tells us, that poſterity  
proved a more equitable judge than Panides. And if I  
had not told this tale in my turn, I muſt have incurred  
the cenſure of all the ſchoolmaſters in the nation.

v. 173. *So close their order, etc.*] When Homer  
vetouches the ſame ſubject, he has always the art to

Or had the god of war inclin'd his eyes,  
 The god of war had own'd a just surprize.  
 A chosen phalanx, firm, resolv'd as fate,  
 Descending Hector and his battle wait.

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rise in his ideas above what he said before. We shall find an instance of it in this place; if we compare this manner of commending the exact discipline of an army, with what he had made use of on the same occasion at the end of the fourth Iliad. There it is said, that the most experienced warrior could not have reprehended any thing, had he been led by Pallas through the battle; but here he carries it farther, in affirming, that Pallas and the god of war themselves must have admired this disposition of the Grecian forces. Eustathius.

v. 177. *A chosen phalanx, firm, etc.*] Homer in these lines has given us a description of the ancient phalanx, which consisted of several ranks of men closely ranged in this order. The first line stood with their spears levelled directly forward; the second rank being armed with spears two cubits longer, levelled them likewise forward through the interstices of the first; and the third in the same manner held forth their spears yet longer, through the two former ranks; so that the points of the spears of three ranks terminated in one line. All the other ranks stood with their spears erected, in readiness to advance, and fill the vacant places of such as fell. This is the account Eustathius gives of the Phalanx, which he observes was only fit for a body of men acting on the defensive, but improper for the attack: and accordingly Homer here only describes the Greeks ordering their battle in this manner, when they had no other view but to stand their ground against the furious assault of the Trojans. The same commentator observes from Hermolytus, an ancient writer of Tactics, that this manner of ordering the phalanx was afterwards introduced among the Spartans by Lycurgus;

An iron scene gleams dreadful o'er the fields,  
 Armour in armour lock'd, and shields in shields,      180  
 Spears lean on spears, on targets targets throng,  
 Helms stuck to helms, and man drove man along.  
 The floating plumes unnumber'd wave above,  
 As when an earthquake stirs the nodding grove;  
 And levell'd at the skies with pointing rays,      185  
 Their brandish'd lances at each motion blaze.

Thus breathing death, in terrible array,  
 The close-compacted legions urg'd their way:  
 Fierce they drove on, impatient to destroy;  
 Troy charg'd the first, and Hector first of Troy.      190  
 As from some craggy mountain's forehead torn,  
 A rock's round fragment flies, with fury borne,

among the Argives by Lyfander, among the Thebans by Epaminondas, and among the Macedonians by Charidemus.

v. 191. *As from some craggy mountain's forehead torn, etc*] This is one of the noblest similes in all Homer, and the most justly corresponding in its circumstances to the thing described. The furious descent of Hector from the wall represented by a stone that flies from the top of a rock, the hero pushed on by the superior force of Jupiter, as the stone driven by a torrent; the ruins of the wall falling after him, all things yielding before him, the clamour and tumult around him, all imagined in the violent bounding and leaping of the stone, the crackling of the woods, the shock, the noise, the rapidity, the irresistibility, and the augmentation of force in its progress: all these points of likeness make but the first part of this admirable simile. Then the sudden stop of the stone when it comes to the plain,

(Which from the stubborn stone a torrent rends)

Precipitate the pond'rous mass descends :

as of Hector at the phalanx of the Ajaces (alluding also to the natural situation of the ground, Hector rushing down the declivity of the shore, and being stopped on the level of the sea :) and lastly, the immobility of both when so stopped, the enemy being as unable to move him back, as he to get forward : this last branch of the comparison is the happiest in the world, and though not hitherto observed, is what methinks makes the principal beauty and force of it. The simile is copied by Virgil, *Æneid.* 12.

*Ac veluti montis saxum de vertice præceps,  
Cum ruit avulsum vento, seu turbidus imber  
Proluit, aut annis solvit sublapsa vetustas :  
Fertur in abruptum magno mons improbus actu  
Exultatque solo ; sylvas, armenta, virosque  
Involvens secum. Dissecta per agmina Turnus  
Sic urbis ruit ad muros —————*

And Tasso has again copied it from Virgil in his 18th book.

*Qual gran sasso tal hor, che o la vecchiezza  
Solve da un monte, o scelle ira de' venti  
Ruionosa dirupa, e porta, e spezza  
Le selve, e con le case anco gli armenti  
Tal giu tranea de la sublime altezza  
L'horribil trave e merli, e arme, e gente,  
Die la torre a quel moto uno, o duo crolli ;  
Tremar le mura, e rimbombaro i colli ;*

It is but justice to Homer to take notice how infinitely inferior both these similes are to their original. They have taken the image without the likeness, and lost those

From steep to steep the rolling ruin bounds ;      195  
 At ev'ry shock the crackling wood reflows ;  
 Still gath'ring force, it smokes ; and, urg'd amain,  
 Whirls, leaps, and thunders down, impetuous to the plain :  
 There stops—So Hector. Their whole force he prov'd,  
 Resistless when he rag'd, and when he stopt, unmov'd.

On him the war is bent, the darts are shed,      201  
 And all their faulchions wave around his head :  
 Repuls'd he stands, nor from his stand retires ;  
 But with repeated shouts his army fires.

Trojans ! be firm : this arm shall make your way      205  
 Through yon' square body, and that black array :  
 Stand, and my spear shall rout their scatt'ring pow'r,  
 Strong as they seem embattel'd like a tow'r.  
 For he that Juno's heav'nly bosom warms,  
 The first of gods, this day inspires our arms.      210

corresponding circumstances which raise the justness and sublimity of Homer's. In Virgil it is only the violence of Turnus in which the whole application consists : and in Tasso it has no farther allusion than to the fall of a tower in general.


There is yet another beauty in the numbers of this part. As the verses themselves make us see, the sound of them makes us hear, what they represent ; in the noble roughness, rapidity, and sonorous cadence, that distinguishes them.

*Ῥήξας, ἀσπέρῳ ὀμβρῶν ἀναιδέος ἔχματα πέτρης, etc.*

The translation, however short it falls of these beauties, may serve to shew the reader, that there was at least an endeavour to imitate them.

He said, and rous'd the soul in ev'ry breast;  
Urg'd with desire of fame, beyond the rest,  
Forth march'd Deiphobus; but marching, held  
Before his wary steps, his ample shield.  
Bold Merion aim'd a stroke, nor aim'd it wide, 215  
The glitt'ring jav'lin pierc'd the tough bull-hide;  
But pierc'd not through: unfaithful to his hand,  
The point broke short, and sparkled in the sand.  
The Trojan warrior, touch'd with timely fear,  
On the rais'd orb to distance bore the spear: 220  
The Greek retreating mourn'd his frustrate blow,  
And curs'd the treach'rous lance that spar'd a foe;  
Then to the ships with furly speed he went,  
To seek a surer jav'lin in his tent.

Meanwhile with rising rage the battle glows, 225  
The tumult thickens, and the clamour grows.  
By Teucer's arm the warlike Imbrius bleeds,  
The son of Mentor rich in gen'rous steeds.  
Ere yet to Troy the sons of Greece were led,  
In fair Pedæus' verdant pastures bred, 230  
The youth had dwelt; remote from war's alarms,  
And bless'd in bright Medesicaste's arms:  
(This nymph, the fruit of Priam's ravag'd joy,  
Ally'd the warrior to the House of Troy.)  
To Troy, when glory call'd his arms, he came, 235  
And match'd the bravest of her chiefs in fame:  
With Priam's sons, a guardian of the throne,  
He liv'd, belov'd and honour'd as his own.





Book XIII.    H O M E R's I L I A D.    23  
 Him Teucer pierc'd between the throat and ear :  
 He groans beneath the Telamonian spear.    240  
 As from some far seen mountain's airy crown,  
 Subdu'd by steel, a tall ash tumbles down,  
 And foils its verdant tresses on the ground :  
 So falls the youth ; his arms the fall resound,  
 Then Teucer rushing to despoil the dead,    245  
 From Hector's hand a shining jav'lin fled :  
 He saw and shun'd the death : the forceful dart  
 Sung on, and pierc'd Amphimachus his heart,  
 Cteatus' son, of Neptune's boasted line ;  
 Vain was his courage, and his race divine !    250  
 Prostrate he falls ; his clanging arms resound,  
 And his broad buckler thunders on the ground.  
 To seize his beamy helm the victor flies,  
 And just had fast'ned on the dazzling prize,  
 When Ajax' manly arm a jav'lin flung ;    255  
 Full on the shield's round boss the weapon rung ;  
 He felt the shock, nor more was doom'd to feel  
 Secure in mail, and sheath'd in shining steel.  
 Repuls'd he yields ; the victor Greeks obtain  
 The spoils contested, and bear off the slain.    260  
 Between the leaders of th'Athenian line,  
 (Stitchius the brave, Menestheus the divine,)  
 Deplor'd Amphimachus, sad object ! lies ;  
 Imbrius remains the fierce Ajaces' prize.  
 As two grim lions bear across the lawn,    265  
 Snatch'd from devouring hounds, a slaughter'd fawn,

In their fell jaws high lifting through the wood,  
 And sprinkling all the shrubs with drops of blood;  
 So these the chief: great Ajax from the dead  
 Strips his bright arms, Oileus lops his head: 270  
 Toss'd like a ball, and whirl'd in air away,  
 At Hector's feet the goary visage lay.

The god of ocean fir'd with stern disdain,  
 And pierc'd with sorrow for his † grandson slain,  
 Inspires the Grecian hearts, confirms their hands, 275  
 And breathes destruction on the Trojan bands.  
 Swift as a whirlwind rushing to the fleet,  
 He finds the lance-fam'd Idomen of Crete;

† Amphinachus.

v. 278. *Idomen of Crete.*] Idomeneus appears at large in this book, whose character, if I take it right, is such as we see pretty often in common life: a person of the first rank, sufficient enough of his high birth, growing into years, conscious of his decline of strength and active qualities; and therefore endeavouring to make it up to himself in dignity, and to preserve the veneration of others. The true picture of a stiff old soldier, not willing to lose any of the reputation he has acquired: yet not inconsiderate in danger; but by the sense of his age, and by his experience in battle, become too cautious to engage with any great odds against him: very careful and tender of his soldiers, whom he had commanded so long, that they were become old acquaintance; (so that it was with great judgment Homer chose to introduce him here, in performing a kind office to one of them who was wounded.) Talkative upon subjects of war, as afraid that others might lose the memory of what he had done in better days, of which the long conversation with Meriones, and Ajax's reproach to him



His pensive brow the gen'rous care exprest  
With which a wounded soldier touch'd his breast, 280

him in Iliad 23. v. 478. of the original, are sufficient proofs. One may observe some strokes of lordliness and state in his character: that respect Agamemnon seems careful to treat him with, and the particular distinctions shewn him at table, are mentioned in a manner that insinuates they were points upon which this prince not a little insisted. Iliad. 4. v. 296, *etc.* The vaunting of his family in this book, together with his sarcasms and contemptuous railleries on his dead enemies, favour of the same turn of mind. And it seems there was among the ancients a tradition of Idomeneus, which strengthens this conjecture of his pride: for we find in the Heroics of Philostratus, that before he would come to the Trojan war, he demanded a share in the sovereign command with Agamemnon himself.

I must, upon this occasion, make an observation once for all, which will be applicable to many passages in Homer, and afford a solution of many difficulties. It is, that our author drew several of his characters with an eye to the histories then known of famous persons, or the traditions that past in those times. One cannot believe otherwise of a poet, who appears so nicely exact in observing all the customs of the age he described; nor can we imagine the infinite number of minute circumstances relating to particular persons, which we meet with every where in his poem, could possibly have been invented purely as ornaments to it. This reflexion will account for a hundred seeming oddnesses not only in the characters, but in the speeches of the Iliad: for as no author is more true than Homer to the character of the person he introduces speaking, so no one more often suits his oratory to the character of the person spoken to. Many of these beauties must needs be lost to us, yet this supposition will give a new light to

Whom in the chance of war a jav'lin tore,  
 And his sad comrades from the battle bore;  
 Him to the surgeons of the camp he sent;  
 That office paid, he issu'd from his tent,  
 Fierce for the fight: to him the god begun, 285  
 In Thoas' voice, Andræmon's valiant son,  
 Who rul'd where Calydon's white rocks arise,  
 And Pleuron's chalky cliffs emblaze the skies.

Where's now th' imperious vaunt, the daring boast  
 Of Greece victorious, and proud Ilion lost? 290

To whom the king. On Greece no blame be thrown,  
 Arms are her trade, and war is all her own.  
 Her hardy heroes from the well-fought plains  
 Nor fear with-holds, nor shameful sloth detains.  
 'Tis heav'n, alas! and Jove's all pow'rful doom, 295  
 That far, far distant from our native home

several particulars. For instance, the speech I have been mentioning of Agamemnon to Idomeneus in the fourth book, where he puts this hero in mind of the magnificent entertainments he had given him, becomes in this view much less odd and surprizing. Or, who can tell but it had some allusion to the manners of the Cretans whom he commanded, whose character was so well known, as to become a proverb? *The Cretans, evil beasts, and slow bellies.*

v. 283. *The surgeons of the camp.*] Podalirius and Machaon were not the only physicians in the army; it appears from some passages in this poem, that each body of troops had one peculiar to themselves. It may not be improper to advertise, that the ancient physicians were all surgeons. Eustathius.

Wills us to fall, inglorious ! Oh my friend !  
Once foremost in the fight, still prone to lend  
Or arms, or counsels ; now perform thy best,  
And what thou can'st not singly, urge the rest. 300

Thus he ; and thus the god, whose force can make  
The solid globe's eternal basis shake.  
Ah ! never may he see his native land,  
But feed the vultures on this hateful strand,  
Who seeks ignobly in his ships to stay, 305  
Nor dares to combat on this signal day !  
For this, behold ! in horrid arms I shine,  
And urge thy soul to rival acts with mine ;  
Together let us battle on the plain ;  
Two, not the worst ; nor ev'n this succour vain : 310  
Not vain the weakest, if their force unite ;  
But ours, the bravest have confess'd in fight.

This said, he rushes where the combat burns :  
Swift to his tent the Cretan king returns.  
From thence, two jav'lines glitt'ring in his hand, 315  
And clad in arms that lighten'd all the strand,  
Fierce on the foe th' impetuous hero drove ;  
Like lightning bursting from the arm of Jove,  
Which to pale man the wrath of heav'n declares,  
Or terrifies th' offending world with wars ; 320  
In streamy sparkles, kindling all the skies,  
From pole to pole the trail of glory flies.  
Thus his bright armour o'er the dazled throng  
Gleam'd dreadful, as the monarch flash'd along.

Him, near his tent, Meriones attends ;

325

Whom thus he questions : Ever best of friends !

v. 325.—*Meriones attends :*

*Whom thus he questions——]*

This conversation between Idomeneus and Meriones is generally censured as highly improper and out of place, and as such is given up even by M. Dacier, the most zealous of our poet's defenders. However, if we look closely into the occasion and drift of this discourse, the accusation will, I believe, appear not so well grounded. Two persons of distinction, just when the enemy is put to a stop by the Ajaces, meet behind the army : having each on important occasions retired out of the fight, the one to help a wounded soldier, the other to seek a new weapon. Idomeneus, who is superior in years as well as authority, returning to the battle, is surprized to meet Meriones out of it, who was one of his own officers (*θεράπων*, as Homer here calls him) and being jealous of his soldier's honour, demands the cause of his quitting the fight. Meriones having told him it was the want of a spear, he yet seems unsatisfied with the excuse ; adding, that he himself did not approve of that distant manner of fighting with a spear. Meriones being touched to the quick with this reproach, replies, that he of all the Greeks, had the least reason to suspect his courage : whereupon Idomeneus perceiving him highly piqued, assures him he entertains no such hard thoughts of him, since he had often known his courage proved on such occasions, where the danger being greater and the number smaller, it was impossible for a coward to conceal his natural infirmity : but now recollecting that a malicious mind might give a sinister interpretation to their inactivity during this discourse, he immediately breaks it off upon that reflection. As therefore this conversation has its rise from a jealousy in the most tender point of honour, I think the poet cannot justly be blamed for

O say, in ev'ry art of battle skill'd,  
 What holds thy courage from so brave a field?  
 On some important message art thou bound,  
 Or bleeds my friend by some unhappy wound? 330  
 Inglorious here, my soul abhors to stay,  
 And glows with prospects of th'approaching day.

O prince! Meriones replies, whose care  
 Leads forth th'embattel'd sons of Crete to war;  
 This speaks my grief; this headless lance I wield; 335  
 The rest lies rooted in a Trojan shield.

To whom the Cretan: Enter, and receive  
 The wanted weapons; those my tent can give;  
 Spears I have store, (and Trojan lances all,)  
 That shed a lustre round th'illumin'd wall. 340

suffering a discourse so full of warm sentiments to run on for about forty verses; which after all cannot be supposed to take up more than two or three minutes from action.

v. 335. *This headless lance, etc.*] We have often seen several of Homer's combatants lose and break their spears, yet they do not therefore retire from the battle to seek other weapons; why therefore does Homer here send Meriones on this errand? It may be said, that in the kind of fight which the Greeks now maintained drawn up into the phalanx, Meriones was useless without this weapon.

v. 339. *Spears I have store, etc.*] Idomeneus describes his tent as a magazine, stored with variety of arms won from the enemy, which were not only laid up as useless trophies of his victories, but kept there in order to supply his own, and his friends occasions. And this consideration shews us one reason why these war-

Though I, disdainful of the distant war,  
Nor trust the dart, or aim th' uncertain spear,  
Yet hand to hand I fight, and spoil the slain ;  
And thence these trophies, and these arms I gain.  
Enter, and see on heaps the helmets roll'd, 345  
And high-hung spears, and shields that flame with gold.

rriors contended with such eagerness to carry off the arms of a vanquished enemy.

This gives me an occasion to animadvert upon a false remark of Eustathius, which is inserted in the notes on the 11th book, "That Homer, to shew us nothing  
"is so unseasonable in a battle as to stay to despoil the  
"slain, feigns that most of the warriors who do it, are  
"killed, wounded, or unsuccessful." I am astonished how so great a mistake should fall from any man who had read Homer, much more from one who had read him so thoroughly, and even superstitiously as the old archbishop of Thessalonica. There is scarce a book in Homer that does not abound with instances to the contrary, where the conquerors stript their enemies, and bear off their spoils in triumph. It was (as I have already said in the essay on Homer's battles) as honourable an exploit in those days to carry off the arms, as it is now to gain a standard. But it is a strange consequence, that because our author sometimes represents a man unsuccessful in a glorious attempt, he therefore discommends the attempt itself; and is as good an argument against encountering an enemy living, as against despoiling him dead. One ought not to confound this with plundering, between which Homer has so well marked the distinction; when he constantly speaks of the spoils as glorious, but makes Nestor in the 6th book, and Hector in the 15th, directly forbid the pillage, as a practice that has often proved fatal in the midst of a victory, and sometimes even after it,



Nor vain, said Merion, are our martial toils ;  
 We too can boast of no ignoble spoils.  
 But those my ship contains, whence distant far,  
 I fight conspicuous in the van of war. 350  
 What need I more ? If any Greek there be  
 Who knows not Merion, I appeal to thee.  
 To this, Idomeneus. The fields of fight  
 Have prov'd thy valour, and unconquer'd might ;  
 And were some ambush for the foes design'd, 355  
 Ev'n there thy courage would not lag behind.  
 In that sharp service, singled from the rest,  
 The fear of each, or valour, stands confest.

v. 353. *To this, Idomeneus.*] There is a great deal more dialogue in Homer than in Virgil. The Roman poet's are generally set speeches, those of the Greek more in conversation. What Virgil does by two words of a narration, Homer brings about by a speech ; he hardly raises one of his heroes out of bed without some talk concerning it. There are not only replies, but rejoinders in Homer, a thing scarce ever to be found in Virgil ; the consequence whereof is, that there must be in the Iliad many continued conversations, such as this of our two heroes, a little resembling common chit-chat. This renders the poem more natural and animated, but less grave and majestic. However, that such was the way of writing generally practised in those ancient times, appears from the like manner used in most of the books of the old testament ; and it particularly agreed with our author's warm imagination, which delighted in perpetual imagery, and in painting every circumstance of what he described.

v. 357. *In that sharp service, etc.*] In a general battle cowardice may be the more easily concealed, by rea-

No force, nor firmness, the pale coward shews ;  
 He shifts his place ; his colour comes and goes ; 360  
 A dropping sweat creeps cold on ev'ry part ;  
 Against his bosom beats his quiv'ring heart ;  
 Terror and death in his wild eye-balls stare ;  
 With chatt'ring teeth he stands, and stiff'ning hair,  
 And looks a bloodless image of despair ! 365  
 Not so the brave——still dauntless, still the same,  
 Unchang'd his colour, and unmov'd his frame ;  
 Compos'd his thought, determin'd is his eye,  
 And fix'd his soul, to conquer or to die :  
 If ought disturb the tenour of his breast, 370  
 'Tis but the wish to strike before the rest.

In such assays thy blameless worth is known,  
 And ev'ry art of dang'rous war thy own.  
 By chance of fight whatever wounds you bore,  
 Those wounds were glorious all, and all before ; 375  
 Such as may teach, 'twas still thy brave delight  
 T' oppose thy bosom where the foremost fight.  
 But why, like infants, cold to honour's charms,  
 Stand we to talk, when glory calls to arms ?  
 Go—from my conquer'd spears, the choicest take, 380  
 And to their owners send them nobly back.

son of the number of the combatants ; but in an ambuscade, where the soldiers are few, each must be discovered to be what he is ; this is the reason why the ancients entertained so great an idea of this sort of war ; the bravest men were always chosen to serve upon such occasions. Eustathius.



Swift as the word bold Merion snatch'd a spear,  
And breathing slaughter follow'd to the war.

So Mars armipotent invades the plain,

(The wide destroyer of the race of man) 385

v. 384. *So Mars armipotent*, etc.] Homer varies his similitudes with all imaginable art, sometimes deriving them from the properties of animals, sometimes from natural passions, sometimes from the occurrences of life, and sometimes, as in the simile before us, from history. The invention of Mars's passage from Thrace, (which was feigned to be the country of that god) to the Phlegyans and Ephyrians, is a very beautiful and poetical manner of celebrating the martial genius of that people, who lived in perpetual wars.

Methinks there is something of a fine enthusiasm, in Homer's manner of fetching a compass, as it were, to draw in new images, besides those in which the direct point of likeness consists. Milton perfectly well understood the beauty of these digressive images, as we may see from the following simile, which is in a manner made up of them.

*Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades  
High over-arch'd embow'r ; or scatter'd sedge  
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd  
Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast, whose wave o'erthrew  
Bustiris and his Memphian chivalry,  
While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd  
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld  
From the safe shore their floating carcases,  
And broken chariot-wheels :——So thick bestrown  
Abject and lost lay these.———*

Terror, his best lov'd son, attends his course,  
 Arm'd with stern boldness, and enormous force;  
 The pride of haughty warriors to confound,  
 And lay the strength of tyrants on the ground:  
 From Thrace they fly, call'd to the dire alarms 390  
 Of warring Phlegians, and Ephyrian arms;  
 Invok'd by both, relentless they dispose  
 To these glad conquest, murd'rous rout to those.  
 So march the leaders of the Cretan train,  
 And their bright arms shot horror o'er the plain. 395  
 Then first spake Merion: Shall we join the right,  
 Or combat in the centre of the fight?  
 Or to the left our wanted succour lend?  
 Hazard and fame all parts alike attend.

As for the general purport of this comparison of Homer, it gives us a noble and majestic idea, at once, of Idomeneus and Meriones, represented by Mars and his son Terror; in which each of these heroes is greatly elevated, yet the just distinction between them preserved. The beautiful simile of Virgil, in his 12th Æneid, is drawn with an eye to this of our author.

*Qualis apud gelidi cum flumina concitus Hebri  
 Sanguineus Mavors clypeo increpat, atque furentes  
 Bella movens immittit equos; illi æquore aperto  
 Ante Notos Zephyrumque volant: gemit ultima pulsæ  
 Thraca pedum: circumque atræ Formidinis ora,  
 Iræque, Infidiæque, Dei comitatus, aguntur.*

v. 396. — Shall we join the right,  
 Or combat in the centre of the fight,  
 Or to the left our wanted succour lend?

The common interpreters have to this question of Me-

Not in the centre, Idomen reply'd, 400

Our ablest chieftains the main battle guide ;

Each godlike Ajax makes that post his care,

And gallant Teucer deals destruction there :

Skill'd, or with shafts to gall the distant field,

Or bear close battle on the sounding shield. 405

riones given a meaning which is highly impertinent, if not downright nonsense ; explaining it thus. *Shall we fight on the right, or in the middle ; or on the left, for no where else do the Greeks so much want assistance ?* which amounts to this : “ Shall we engage where our “ assistance is most wanted, or where it is not wanted ? ” The context, as well as the words of the original, oblige us to understand it in this obvious meaning ; *Shall we bring our assistance to the right, to the left or to the centre ? Since the Greeks being equally pressed and engaged on all sides, equally need our aid in all parts.*

v. 400. *Not in the centre, etc.*] There is in this answer of Idomeneus a small circumstance which is overlooked by the commentators, but in which the whole spirit and reason of what is said by him consists. He says he is in no fear for the centre, since it is defended by Teucer and Ajax ; Teucer being not only most famous for the use of the bow, but likewise excellent *ἐν σταδίῃ ὑσμίνῃ*, in a *close standing fight* : and as for Ajax, though not so swift of foot as Achilles, yet he was equal to him *ἐν αὐτοσταδίῃ*, in the same *stedfast* manner of fighting ; hereby intimating that he was secure for the centre, because that post was defended by two persons both accomplished in that part of war, which was most necessary for the service they were engaged in ; the two expressions before mentioned peculiarly signifying a *firm* and *steady* way of fighting, most useful in maintaining a post.

These can the rage of haughty Hector tame :  
Safe in their arms, the navy fears no flame ;  
Till Jove himself descends, his bolts to shed,  
And hurl the brazen ruin at our head.  
Great must he be, of more than human birth, 410  
Nor feed like mortals on the fruits of earth,  
Him neither rocks can crush, nor steel can wound,  
Whom Ajax fells not on th' ensanguin'd ground.  
In standing fight he mates Achilles' force,  
Excell'd alone in swiftness in the course. 415  
Then to the left our ready arms apply,  
And live with glory, or with glory die:

He said ; and Merion to th' appointed place,  
Fierce as the god of battles, urg'd his pace.  
Soon as the foe the shining chiefs beheld 420  
Rush like a fiery torrent o'er the field,  
Their force embody'd in a tide they pour ;  
The rising combate sounds along the shore.  
As warring winds, in Sirius' sultry reign,  
From diff'rent quarters sweep the sandy plain ; 425  
On ev'ry side the dusty whirlwinds rise,  
And the dry fields are lifted to the skies :  
Thus by despair, hope, rage, together driv'n,  
Met the black hosts, and meeting, darken'd heav'n.  
All dreadful glar'd the iron face of war, 430  
Bristled with upright spears, that flash'd afar ;  
Dire was the gleam, of breast-plates, helms and shields,  
And polish'd arms emblaz'd the flaming fields :

Tremendous

Tremendous scene ! that gen'ral horror gave,  
But touch'd with joy the bosoms of the brave.      435

Saturn's great sons in fierce contention vy'd,  
And crouds of heroes in their anger dy'd.  
The fire of earth and heav'n, by Thetis won  
To crown with glory Peleus' godlike son,  
Will'd not destruction to the Grecian pow'rs,      440  
But spar'd a while the destin'd Trojan tow'rs:

While Neptune rising from his azure main,  
Warr'd on the king of heav'n with stern disdain,      }  
And breath'd revenge, and fir'd the Grecian train,      }  
Gods of one source, of one etherial race,      445

Alike divine, and heav'n their native place ;  
But Jove the greater ; first-born of the skies,  
And more than men, or gods, supremely wise.  
For this, of Jove's superior might afraid,  
Neptune in human form conceal'd his aid.      450

These pow'rs infold the Greck and Trojan train  
In war and discord's adamant chain ;

v. 451.] It will be necessary, for the better understanding the conduct of Homer in every battle he describes, to reflect on the particular kind of fight, and the circumstances that distinguish each. In this view therefore we ought to remember, through this whole book, that the battle, described in it, is a fixed close fight, wherein the armies engage in a gross compact body, without any skirmishes, or feats of activity, so often mentioned in the foregoing engagements. We see at the beginning of it the Grecians form a phalanx, v. 177. which continues unbroken, at the very end, v. 1006.

Indissolubly strong, the fatal tye  
Is stretch'd on both, and close-compell'd they die.

The chief weapon made use of is a spear, being most proper for this manner of combate; nor do we see any other use of a chariot, but to carry off the dead or wounded, as in the instance of Harpalion and Deiphobus.

From hence we may observe with what judgment and propriety Homer introduces Idomeneus as the chief in action on this occasion: for this hero being declined from his prime, and somewhat stiff with years, was only fit for this kind of engagement, as Homer expressly says in the 512th verse of the present book.

Οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἐμπεδα γυῖα ποδῶν ἦν ὀρμηθέντι,  
Οὐτ' ἄρ' ἐπαίξαι μεθ' ἑὸν βέλος, ἔπ' ἀλίσσθαι.  
Τῷ ῥα καὶ ἐν σαδίῃ μὲν ἀμύνετο νηλεὲς ἥμαρ.

See the translation, ver. 648, *etc.*

v. 452. *In war and discord's adamantine chain.*] This short but comprehensive allegory, is very proper to give us an idea of the present condition of the two contending armies, who being both powerfully sustained by the assistance of superior deities, join and mix together in a close and bloody engagement, without any remarkable advantage on either side. To image to us this state of things, the poet represents Jupiter and Neptune holding the two armies close bound by a mighty chain, which he calls the knot of contention and war, and of which the two gods draw the extremities, whereby the enclosed armies are compelled together, without any possibility on either side to separate or conquer. There is not perhaps in Homer an image at once so exact and so bold. Madam Dacier acknowledges, that despairing to make this passage shine in her language, she purposefully omitted it in her translation: but from what she says



Dreadful in arms, and grown in combates grey, 455  
 The bold Idomeneus controuls the day.  
 First by his hand Othryoneus was slain,  
 Swell'd with false hopes, with mad ambition vain!  
 Call'd by the voice of war to martial fame,  
 From high Cabesus' distant walls he came; 460  
 Cassandra's love he fought, with boasts of pow'r,  
 And promis'd conquest was the profer'd dow'r.  
 The king consented, by his vaunts abus'd;  
 The king consented, but the fates refus'd  
 Proud of himself, and of th' imagin'd bride, 465  
 The field he measur'd with a larger stride.  
 Him, as he stalk'd, the Cretan jav'lin found;  
 Vain was his breast-plate to repel the wound:  
 His dream of glory lost, he plung'd to hell:  
 His arms resounded as the boaster fell. 470  
 The great Idomeneus bestrides the dead:  
 And thus, he cries, Behold thy promise sped!

in her annotations, it seems that she did not rightly apprehend the propriety and beauty of it. Hobbes too was not very sensible of it, when he translated it so oddly,

*And thus the saw from brother unto brother  
 Of cruel war was drawn alternately,  
 And many slain on one side and the other.*

v. 471. *The great Idomeneus bestrides the dead;  
 And thus, he cries,———]*

It seems, says Eustathius on this place, that the Iliad being an heroic poem, is of too serious a nature to admit of raillery; yet Homer has found the secret of joining two things that are in a manner incompatible. For

this piece of raillery is so far from raising laughter, that it becomes a hero, and is capable to inflame the courage of all who hear it. It also elevates the character of Idomeneus, who notwithstanding he is in the midst of imminent dangers, preserves his usual gaiety of temper which is the greatest evidence of an uncommon courage.

I confess I am of an opinion very different from this of Eustathius, which is also adopted by M. Dacier. So severe and bloody an irony to a dying person is a fault in morals, if not in poetry itself. It should not have place at all, or if it should, is ill placed here. Idomeneus is represented a brave man, nay, a man of a compassionate nature, in the circumstance he was introduced in, of assisting a wounded soldier. What provocation could such an one have, to insult so barbarously an unfortunate prince, being neither his rival nor particular enemy. True courage is inseparable from humanity, and all generous warriors regret the very victories they gain, when they reflect what a price of blood they cost. I know it may be answered, that these were not the manners of Homer's time, a spirit of violence and devastation then reigned, even among the chosen people of God, as may be seen from the actions of Joshua, *etc.* However, if one would forgive the cruelty, one cannot forgive the gaiety on such an occasion. These inhuman jests the poet was so far from being obliged to make, that he was on the contrary forced to break through the general serious air of his poem to introduce them. Would it not raise a suspicion, that (whatever we see of his superior genius in other respects) his own views of morality were not elevated above the barbarity of his age? I think, indeed, the thing by far the most shocking in this author, is that spirit of cruelty which appears too manifestly in the Iliad.

Virgil was too judicious to imitate Homer in these licences, and is much more reserved in his sarcasms and

Such is the help thy arms to Ilium bring,  
And such the contract of the Phrygian king !

insults. There are not above four or five in the whole *Æneid*. That of Pyrrhus to Priam in the second book, though barbarous in itself, may be accounted for as intended to raise a character of horror, and render the action of Pyrrhus odious ; whereas Homer stains his most favourite characters with these barbarities. That of Ascanius over Numanus in the ninth, was a fair opportunity where Virgil might have indulged the humour of a cruel raillery, and have been excused by the youth and gaiety of the speaker ; yet it is no more than a very moderate answer to the insolences with which he had just been provoked by his enemy, only retorting two of his own words upon him..

— *I, verbis virtutem illude superbis !  
Bis capti Phryges hæc Rutulis responsa remittunt.*

He never suffers his *Æneas* to fall into this practice, but while he is on fire with indignation after the death of his friend *Pallas* : that short one to *Mezentius* is the least that could be said to such a tyrant.

— *Ubi nunc Mezentius acer, et illa  
Effera vis animi ?*

The worst-natured one I remember, which yet is more excusable than Homer's, is that of *Turnus* to *Eumedes* in the 12th book.

*En, agros, et quam bello, Trojane, petisti,  
Hesperiam metire jacens ; hæc præmia, qui me  
Ferro ausi tentare, ferunt ; sic mœnia conduit.*

v. 474: *And such the contract of the Phrygian king, etc.*] It was but natural to raise a question, on occasion of these and other passages in Homer, how it comes to pass that the heroes of different nations are so well ac-

Our offers now, illustrious prince ! receive ; 475  
 For such an aid what will not Argos give ?  
 To conquer Troy, with ours thy forces join,  
 And count Atrides' fairest daughter thine.  
 Meantime, on farther methods to advise,  
 Come, follow to the fleet thy new allies ; 480  
 There hear what Greece has on her part to say.  
 He spoke, and dragg'd the goary corse away.

This Asius view'd, unable to contain,  
 Before his chariot warring on the plain ;  
 (His valu'd courfers, to his squire consign'd, 485  
 Impatient panted on his neck behind)  
 To vengeance rising with a sudden spring,  
 He hop'd the conquest of the Cretan king.  
 The wary Cretan, as his foe drew near,  
 Full on his throat discharg'd the forceful spear : 490  
 Beneath the chin the point was seen to glide,  
 And glitter'd, extant at the farther side.  
 As when the mountain oak, or poplar tall,  
 Or pine, fit mast for some great admiral,  
 Groans to the oft-heav'd ax, with many a wound, 495  
 Then spreads a length of ruin o'er the ground :  
 So sunk proud Asius in that dreadful day,  
 And stretch'd before his much-lov'd courfers lay.

quainted with the stories and circumstances of each other ? Eustathius's solution is no ill one, that the warriors on both sides might learn the story of their enemies from the captives they took, during the course of so long a war.

He grinds the dust distain'd with streaming gore,  
And, fierce in death, lies foaming on the shore.      500

Depriv'd of motion, stiff with stupid fear,  
Stands all aghast his trembling charioteer,  
Nor shuns the foe, nor turns the steeds away,  
But falls transfix'd, an unresisting prey :

Pierc'd by Antilochus, he pants beneath      505

The stately car, and labours out his breath.  
Thus Asius' steeds (their mighty master gone)  
Remain the prize of Nestor's youthful son.

Stabb'd at the sight, Deiphobus drew nigh,  
And made, with force, the vengeful weapon fly.      510

The Cretan saw ; and stooping, caus'd to glance  
From his slope shield the disappointed lance.

Beneath the spacious targe (a blazing round,  
Thick with bull hides, and brazen orbits bound,

v. 511. *The Cretan saw, and stooping, etc.*] Nothing could paint in a more lively manner, this whole action, and every circumstance of it, than the following lines. There is the posture of Idomeneus upon seeing the lance flying toward him ; the lifting the shield obliquely to turn it aside ; the arm discovered in that position ; the form, composition, materials, and ornaments of the shield distinctly specified ; the flight of the dart over it ; the sound of it first as it flew, then as it fell ; and the decay of that sound on the edge of the buckler, which being thinner than the other parts, rather tinkled than rung, especially when the first force of the stroke was spent on the orb of it. All this in the compass of so few lines, in which every word is an image, is something more beautifully particular, than I remember to have met with in any poet.



On his rais'd arm by two strong braces stay'd) 515  
 He lay collected in defensive shade.

O'er his safe head the jav'lin idly sung,  
 And on the tinkling verge more faintly rung.  
 Ev'n then, the spear the vig'rous arm confest,  
 And pierc'd, obliquely, king Hypsenor's breast: 520  
 Warm'd in his liver, to the ground it bore

The chief, the people's guardian now no more !

Not unattended, the proud Trojan cries,  
 Nor unreveng'd, lamented Asius lies :  
 For thee, though hell's black portals stand display'd,  
 This mate shall joy thy melancholy shade. 525

Heart-piercing anguish, at the haughty boast,  
 Touch'd ev'ry Greek, but Nestor's son the most.  
 Griev'd as he was, his pious arms attend,  
 And his broad buckler shields his slaughter'd friend ;  
 Till sad Mecistheus and Alastor bore 531  
 His honour'd body to the tented shore.

Nor yet from fight Idomeneus withdraws ;  
 Resolv'd to perish in his country's cause,  
 Or find some foe, whom heav'n and he shall doom  
 To wail his fate in death's eternal gloom. 536

He sees Alcathous in the front aspire :  
 Great Æsyetes was the hero's fire ;  
 His spouse Hippodame, divinely fair,  
 Anchises' eldest hope, and darling care; 540  
 Who charm'd her parent's and her husband's heart,  
 With beauty, sense, and every work of art :



He once, of Ilion's youth, the loveliest boy,  
 The fairest she, of all the fair of Troy.  
 By Neptune now the hapless hero dies, 545  
 Who covers with a cloud those beauteous eyes,  
 And fetters ev'ry limb : yet bent to meet  
 His fate he stands ; nor shuns the lance of Crete.  
 Fixt as some column, or deep-rooted oak,  
 (While the winds sleep) his breast receiv'd the stroke.  
 Before the pond'rous stroke his corselet yields, 551  
 Long us'd to ward the death in fighting fields.  
 The riven armour sends a jarring sound :  
 His lab'ring heart heaves with so strong a bound,  
 The long lance shakes, and vibrates in the wound :

v. 543. *He once, of Ilion's youth, the loveliest boy.*]  
 Some manuscripts, after these words, ὤρετος ἐνὶ Τροίῃ  
 εὐρείῃ, insert the three following verses ;

Πρὶν Ἀντηνορίδης τραφόμεν καὶ Πανθόον ὕιας  
 Πριαμίδας θ' οἱ τρωσὶ μείαπρερον ἵπποδάμοισιν  
 "Εως ἐθ' ἤβην εἶπεν, ὄφελλε δὲ κάριον ἄνθος ;

which I have not translated, as not thinking them genuine. Mr. Barnes is of the same opinion.

v. 554. *His lab'ring heart heaves with so strong a bound,  
 The long lance shakes, and vibrates in the wound.*]

We cannot read Homer without observing a wonderful variety in the wounds and manner of dying. Some of these wounds are painted with very singular circumstances, and those of uncommon art and beauty. This passage is a master-piece in that way ; Alcathous is pierced into the heart, which throbs with so strong a pulse, that the motion is communicated even to the distant end of the spear, which is vibrated thereby.

Fast-flowing from its source, as prone he lay, 556  
Life's purple tide impetuous gush'd away.

Then Idomen, insulting o'er the slain :  
Behold, Deiphobus ! nor vaunt in vain :  
See ! on one Greek three Trojan ghosts attend, 560  
This, my third victim, to the shades I send.  
Approaching now, thy boasted might approve,  
And try the prowess of the seed of Jove.  
From Jove, enamour'd on a mortal dame,  
Great Minos, guardian of his country, came : 565  
Deucalion, blameless prince ! was Minos' heir ;  
His first-born I, the third from Jupiter ;  
O'er spacious Crete, and her bold sons I reign,  
And thence my ships transport me through the main ;  
Lord of a host, o'er all my host I shine, 570  
A scourge to thee, thy father, and thy line.

The Trojan heard ; uncertain, or to meet  
Alone, with vent'rous arms, the king of Crete ;  
Or seek auxiliar force ; at length decreed  
To call some hero to partake the deed. 575  
Forthwith Æneas rises to his thought ;  
For him, in Troy's remotest lines, he fought,

This circumstance might appear too bold, and the effect beyond nature, were we not informed by the most skilful anatomists of the wonderful force of this muscle, which some of them have computed to be equal to the weight of several thousand pounds. Lower de corde, Borellus, et alii.

Where he, incens'd at partial Priam, stands,  
And sees superior posts in meaner hands.

v. 578. — [*Incens'd at partial Priam, etc.*] Homer here gives the reason why Æneas did not fight in the foremost ranks. It was against his inclination that he served Priam, and he was rather engaged by honour and reputation to assist his country, than by any disposition to aid that prince. This passage is purely historical, and the ancients have preserved to us a tradition which serves to explain it. They say that Æneas became suspected by Priam, on account of an oracle which prophesied he should, in process of time, rule over the Trojans. The king therefore shewed him no great degree of esteem or consideration, with design to discredit, and render him despicable to the people. Eustathius. This envy of Priam, and this report of the oracle, are mentioned by Achilles to Æneas in the 20th book.

———— ἢ σὲ γε θυμὸς ἐμοὶ μάχισσάδαι ἀνώγει,  
Ἐλπόμενον Τρώεσιν ἀνάξιν ἵπποδάμοισι,  
Τιμῆς τῆς Πριάμου; ἀτὰρ ἔκεν ἔμ' ἐξεναρτίξης,  
Οὔτοι τ' ἐνεκά γε Πριάμος γέρας ἐν χερί θήσει.  
Εἰσὶ γὰρ οἱ παῖδες. ———

(See verse 216, etc. of the translation.) And Neptune in the same book,

Ἦδη γὰρ Πριάμω γενεὴν ἤχθησθε Κρονίων.  
Νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνείαο βίη Τρώεσιν ἀνάξει.  
Καὶ παῖδες παιδῶν, τοί κεν μείλοπιθ' ἐγένωνται.

In the translation, verse 355, etc.

I shall conclude this note with the character of Æneas, as it is drawn by Philostratus, wherein he makes mention of the same tradition. “ Æneas, says this author, “ was inferior to Hector in battle only, in all else equal, “ and in prudence superior. He was likewise skilful in “ whatever related to the gods, and conscious of what

To him, ambitious of so great an aid, 580  
The bold Deiphobus approach'd, and said:

Now, Trojan prince, employ thy pious arms,  
If e'er thy bosom felt fair honour's charms.

Alcathous dies, thy brother and thy friend!  
Come, and the warrior's lov'd remains defend. 585

Beneath his cares thy early youth was train'd,  
One table fed you; and one roof contain'd.

This deed to fierce Idomeneus we owe;  
Haste, and revenge it on th'insulting foe.

Æneas heard, and for a space resign'd 590  
To tender pity all his manly mind;

'Then rising in his rage, he burns to fight:

The Greek awaits him, with collected might.

As the fell boar on some rough mountain's head,  
Arm'd with wild terrors, and to slaughter bred, 595

When the loud rustics rise, and shout from far,  
Attends the tumult, and expects the war;

O'er his bent back the bristly horrors rise,

Fires stream in lightning from his sanguine eyes,

“ destiny had reserved for him after the taking of Troy.  
“ Incapable of fear, never discomposed, and particularly  
“ possessing himself in the article of danger. Hector is  
“ reported to have been called the hand, and Æneas the  
“ head of the Trojans; and the latter more advantaged  
“ their affairs by his caution, than the former by his  
“ fury. These two heroes were much of the same age,  
“ and the same stature: the air of Æneas had something  
“ in it less bold and forward, but at the same time more  
“ fixed and constant.” Philostrat. Heroic.

His foaming tusks both dogs and men engage,      600  
 But most his hunters rouse his mighty rage.  
 So stood Idomeneus, his jav'lin shook,  
 And met the Trojan with a low'ring look.  
 Antilochus, Deipyrus were near,  
 The youthful offspring of the god of war,      605  
 Merion, and Aphareus, in field renown'd :  
 To these the warrior sent his voice around.  
 Fellows in arms ! your timely aid unite ;  
 Lo, great Æneas rushes to the fight :  
 Sprung from a god, and more than mortal bold ;      610  
 He fresh in youth, and I in arms grown old.  
 Else should this hand, this hour, decide the strife,  
 The great dispute, of glory, or of life.

He spoke, and all as with one soul obey'd ;  
 Their lifted bucklers cast a dreadful shade      615  
 Around the chief. Æneas too demands  
 Th' assisting forces of his native bands :  
 Paris, Deiphobus, Agenor join ;  
 (Co-aids and captains of the Trojan line)  
 In order follow all th' embold'd train ;      620  
 Like Ida's flocks proceeding o'er the plain ;

v. 621. *Like Ida's flocks, etc.*] Homer, whether he treats of the customs of men or beasts, is always a faithful interpreter of nature. When sheep leave the pasture and drink freely, it is a certain sign, that they have found good pasturage, and that they are all sound ; it is therefore upon this account, that Homer says the shepherd rejoices. Homer, we find, well understood what

Before his fleecy care, erect and bold,  
 Stalks the proud ram, the father of the fold :  
 With joy the swain surveys them, as he leads  
 To the cool fountains, through the well-known meads.  
 So joys Æneas, as his native band 626  
 Moves on in rank, and stretches o'er the land.

Round dead Alcathous now the battle rose ;  
 On ev'ry side the steely circle grows ;  
 Now batter'd breast-plates and hack'd helmets ring, 630  
 And o'er their heads unheeded jav'lines sing.  
 Above the rest, two tow'ring chiefs appear,  
 There great Idomeneus, Æneas here.  
 Like gods of war, dispensing fate, they stood,  
 And burn'd to drench the ground with mutual blood.  
 The Trojan weapon whizz'd along in air, 636  
 The Cretan saw, and shunn'd the brazen spear :  
 Sent from an arm so strong, the missive wood  
 Stuck deep in earth and quiver'd where it stood.  
 But Oenomas receiv'd the Cretan's stroke, 640  
 The forceful spear his hollow corselet broke,  
 It ripp'd his belly with a ghastly wound,  
 And roll'd the smoaking entrails to the ground.

Aristotle many ages after him remarked, *viz.* that sheep grow fat by drinking. This therefore is the reason, why shepherds are accus'd to give their flock a certain quantity of salt every five days in the summer, that they may, by this means, drink the more freely. Eulathius.



Stretch'd on the plain, he sobs away his breath,  
 And furious grasps the bloody dust in death.      645  
 The victor from his breast the weapon tears ;  
 (His spoils he could not, for the show'r of spears.)  
 Though now unfit an active war to wage,  
 Heavy with cumb'rous arms, stiff with cold age,  
 His listless limbs unable for the course ;      650  
 In standing fight he yet maintains his force :  
 Till faint with labour, and by foes repell'd,  
 His tir'd, slow steps, he drags from off the field.

Deiphobus beheld him as he past,  
 And, fir'd with hate, a parting jav'lin cast :      655  
 The jav'lin err'd, but held his course along,  
 And pierc'd Ascalaphus, the brave and young :  
 The son of Mars fell gasping on the ground,  
 And gnash'd the dust all bloody with his wound.

Nor knew the furious father of his fall ;      660  
 High-thron'd amidst the great Olympian hall,  
 On golden clouds th' immortal synod fate ;  
 Detain'd from bloody war by Jove and Fate.

Now, where in dust the breathless hero lay,  
 For slain Ascalaphus commenc'd the fray.      665

v. 655. *And, fir'd with hate.*] Homer does not tell us the occasion of this hatred ; but since his days, Simonides and Ibycus write, that Idomeneus and Deiphobus were rivals, and both in love with Helen. This very well agrees with the ancient tradition which Euripides and Virgil have followed : for after the death of Paris, they tell us she was espoused to Deiphobus. Eustathius.

Deiphobus to seize his helmet flies,  
And from his temples rends the glitt'ring prize ;  
Valiant as Mars, Meriones drew near,  
And on his loaded arm discharg'd his spear :  
He drops the weight, disabled with the pain ; 670  
The hollow helmet rings against the plain.  
Swift as a vulture leaping on his prey,  
From his torn arm the Grecian rent away  
The reeking jav'lin, and rejoin'd his friends.  
His wounded brother good Polites tends ; 675  
Around his waist his pious arms he threw,  
And from the rage of combat gently drew :  
Him his swift coursers, on his splendid car  
Rapt from the less'ning thunder of the war ;  
To Troy they drove him, groaning from the shore,  
And sprinkling, as he past, the sands with gore. 681

Meanwhile fresh slaughter bathes the sanguine ground,  
Heaps fall on heaps, and heav'n and earth resound.  
Bold Aphareus by great Æneas bled ;  
As tow'rd the chief he turn'd his daring head, 685  
He pierc'd his throat ; the bending head, deprest  
Beneath his helmet, nods upon his breast ;  
His shield revers'd o'er the fall'n warrior lies ;  
And everlasting slumber seals his eyes,  
Antilochus, as Thoon turn'd him round, 690  
Transpierc'd his back with a dishonest wound :  
The hollow vein that to the neck extends  
Along the chine, his eager jav'lin rends :

Supine he falls, and to his social train  
Spreads his imploring arms, but spreads in vain. 695  
Th' exulting victor leaping where he lay,  
From his broad shoulders tore the spoils away;  
His time observ'd; for clos'd by foes around,  
On all sides thick, the peals of arms resound.  
His shield emboss'd, the ringing storm sustains, 700  
But he impervious and untouch'd remains.  
(Great Neptune's care preserv'd from hostile rage  
This youth, the joy of Nestor's glorious age)  
In arms intrepid, with the first he fought,  
Fac'd ev'ry foe, and ev'ry danger fought; 705  
His winged lance, resistless as the wind,  
Obeys each motion of the master's mind,  
Restless it flies, impatient to be free.  
And meditates the distant enemy.  
The son of Asius, Adamas drew near, 710  
And struck his target with the brazen spear,  
Fierce in his front: but Neptune wards the blow,  
And blunts the jav'lin of th' eluded foe.  
In the broad buckler half the weapon stood;  
Splinter'd on earth flew half the broken wood. 715  
Disarm'd he mingled in the Trojan crew;  
But Merion's spear o'ertook him as he flew,  
Deep in the belly's rim an entrance found,  
Where sharp the pang, and mortal is the wound.  
Bending he fell, and doubled to the ground, 720

Lay panting. Thus an ox, in fetters ty'd,  
 While death's strong pangs distend his lab'ring side,  
 His bulk enormous on the field displays;  
 His heaving heart beats thick, as ebbing life decays.  
 \*The spear, the conqu'ror from his body drew, 725  
 And death's dim shadows swam before his view..

- Next brave Deipyrus in dust was laid :  
 King Helenus wav'd high the Thracian blade,  
 And smote his temples, with an arm so strong,  
 The helm fell off; and roll'd amid the throng : 730  
 There, for some luckier Greek it rests a prize,  
 For dark in death the godlike owner lies !

v. 720. *Bending he fell, and doubled to the ground,  
 Lay panting.*——] The original is,

——— ἰδ' ἐσπόμενος περὶ δεξι

ἧσπας ———

The versification represents the short broken pantings of the dying warrior, in the short sudden break at the second syllable of the second line. And this beauty is, as it happens, precisely copied in the English. It is not often that a translator can do this justice to Homer, but he must be content to imitate these graces and proprieties at more distance, by endeavouring at something parallel, though not the same.

v. 728. *King Helenus.*] The appellation of king was not anciently confined to those only who bore the sovereign dignity, but applied also to others. There was in the island of Cyprus a whole order of officers called kings, whose business it was to receive the relations of informers, concerning all that happened in the island, and to regulate affairs accordingly. Eustathius.

With raging grief great Menelaus burns,  
And fraught with vengeance, to the victor turns;  
That shook the pond'rous lance, in act to throw,. 735  
And this stood adverse with the bended bow:  
Full on his breast the Trojan arrow fell,  
But harmless bounded from the plated steel.  
As on some ample barn's well-harden'd floor,  
(The winds collected at each open door) 740  
While the broad fan with force is whirl'd around,  
Light leaps the golden grain, resulting from the ground:  
So from the steel that guards Atrides' heart,  
Repell'd to distance flies the bounding dart.

v. 739. *As on some ample barn's well-harden'd floor.*]

We ought not to be shocked at the frequency of these similes taken from the ideas of a rural life. In early times, before politeness had raised the esteem of arts subservient to luxury, above those necessary to the subsistence of mankind; agriculture was the employment of persons of the greatest esteem and distinction: we see, in sacred history, princes busy at sheep-shearing; and in the time of the Roman common-wealth, a dictator taken from the plough. Wherefore it ought not to be wondered at, that allusions and comparisons of this kind are frequently used by ancient heroic writers, as well to raise, as illustrate their descriptions. But since these arts are fallen from their ancient dignity, and become the drudgery of the lowest people, the images of them are likewise sunk into meanness, and without this consideration must appear to common readers unworthy to have place in epic poems. It was perhaps through too much deference to such tastes, that Chapman omitted this simile in his translation.

Atrides, watchful of th' unwary foe, 745  
 Pierc'd with his lance the hand that grasp'd the bow,  
 And nail'd it to the eugh: the wounded hand  
 Trail'd the long lance that mark'd with blood the sand:  
 But good Agenor gently from the wound  
 The spear sollicit, and the bandage bound; 750  
 A sling's soft wool, snatch'd from a soldier's side,  
 At once the tent and ligature supply'd.

v. 751. *A sling's soft wool, snatch'd from a soldier's side,  
 At once the tent and ligature supply'd.*]

The words of the original are these:

Αὐτὴν δὲ ξυνέδησεν ἑστρόφω οἷος ἁώτῳ  
 Σφενδόνῃ, ἣν ἄρα οἱ θεράπων ἔχε ποιμένι λαῶν.

This passage, by the commentators, antient and modern, seems rightly understood in the sense expressed in this translation: the word σφενδόνῃ properly signifying a *sling*; which (as Eustathius observes from an old scholiast) was anciently made of woollen strings. Chapman alone dissents from the common interpretation, boldly pronouncing that slings are no where mentioned in the Iliad, without giving any reason for his opinion. He therefore translates the word σφενδόνῃ a *scarf*, by no other authority but that he says, *it was a fitter thing to hang a wounded arm in, than a sling*, and very prettily wheedles his reader into this opinion by a most gallant imagination, that *his squire might carry his scarf about him as a favour of his own or of his master's mistress*. But for the use he has found for this scarf, there is not any pretence from the original; where it is only said the wound was bound up, without any mention of hanging the arm. After all, he is hard put to it in his translation; for being resolved to have a *scarf*, and obliged to



Behold ! Pisander, urg'd by fate's decree,  
 Springs through the ranks to fall, and fall by thee,  
 Great Menelaus ! to enhance thy fame ; 755  
 High-tow'ring in the front, the warrior came,  
 First the sharp lance was by Atrides thrown ;  
 The lance far distant by the winds was blown.  
 Nor pierc'd Pisander through Atrides' shield :  
 Pisander's spear fell shiver'd on the field. 760  
 Not so discourag'd, to the future blind,  
 Vain dreams of conquest swell his haughty mind ;  
 Dauntless he rushes where the Spartan lord  
 Like light'ning brandish'd his far-beaming sword.  
 His left-arm high oppos'd the shining shield : 765  
 His right, beneath, the cover'd pole-axe held ;

mention *wool*, we are left entirely at a loss to know from whence he got the latter.

A like passage recurs near the end of this book, where the poet says the Locrians went to war without shield or spear, only armed,

Τόξοισι καὶ εὐσφόφῳ οἶος ἄάτω. ver. 716.

Which last expression, as all the commentators agree, signifies a *sling*, though the word *σφενδινῆ* is not used. Chapman here likewise without any colour of authority, dissents from the common opinion ; but very inconsistent in his errors, varies his mistake, and assures us, *this expression is the true paraphrasis of a light kind of armour, called a jack, which all our archers used to serve in of old, and which were ever quilted with wool.*

v. 766. *The cover'd pole-axe.*] Homer never ascribes this weapon to any but the Barbarians, for the battle-axe was not used in war by the politer nations. It was the favourite weapon of the Amazons. Eustathius.

(An olive's cloudy grain the handle made,  
 Distinct with studs; and brazen was the blade)  
 This on the helm discharg'd a noble blow;  
 The plume dropp'd nodding to the plain below, 770  
 Shorn from the crest. Atrides wav'd his steel:  
 Deep through his front the weighty faulchion fell.  
 The crashing bones before its force gave way;  
 In dust and blood the groaning hero lay;  
 Forc'd from their ghastly orbs, and spouting gore. 775  
 The clotted eye-balls tumble on the shore.  
 The fierce Atrides spurn'd him as he bled,  
 Tore off his arms, and loud exulting, said.  
 Thus, Trojans, thus, at length be taught to fear;  
 O race perfidious, who delight in war? 780

v. 779. *The speech of Menelaus.*] This speech of Menelaus over his dying enemy, is very different from those with which Homer frequently makes his heroes insult the vanquished, and answers very well the character of this good-natured prince. Here are no insulting taunts, no cruel sarcasms, nor any sporting with the particular misfortunes of the dead; the invectives he makes are general, arising naturally from a remembrance of his wrongs, and being almost nothing else but a recapitulation of them. These reproaches come most justly from this prince, as being the only person among the Greeks who had received any personal injury from the Trojans. The apostrophe he makes to Jupiter, wherein he complains of his protecting a wicked people, has given occasion to censure Homer as guilty of impiety, in making his heroes tax the gods with injustice: but since, in the former part of this speech, it is expressly said, that Jupiter will certainly punish the Trojans by the

Already noble deeds ye have perform'd,  
 A princess rap'd transcends a navy storm'd :  
 In such bold feats your impious might approve,  
 Without th' assistance, or the fear of Jove.  
 The violated rites, the ravish'd dame, 785  
 Our heroes slaughter'd, and our ships on flame ;  
 Crimes heap'd on crimes, shall bend your glory down,  
 And whelm in ruins yon' flagitious town.  
 O thou, great Father ! Lord of earth and skies,  
 Above the thought of man, supremely wise ! 790  
 If from thy hand the feats of mortals flow  
 From whence this favour to an impious foe ?  
 A godless crew, abandon'd and unjust,  
 Still breathing rapine, violence, and lust !

destruction of their city, for violating the laws of hospitality, the latter part ought only to be considered as a complaint to Jupiter for delaying that vengeance : this reflection being no more than what a pious suffering mind, grieved at the flourishing condition of prosperous wickedness, might naturally fall into. Not unlike this is the complaint of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. 12. v. 1. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee : yet let me talk with thee of thy judgments. Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper ? Wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously ?*

Nothing can more fully represent the cruelty and injustice of the Trojans, than the observation with which Menelaus finishes their character, by saying, that they have a more strong, constant, and insatiable appetite after bloodshed and rapine, than others have to satisfy the most agreeable pleasures and natural desires.

The best of things, beyond their measure, cloy ; 795

Sleep's balmy blessing, love's endearing joy ;

The feast, the dance ; whate'er mankind desire,

Ev'n the sweet charms of sacred numbers tire.

But Troy for ever reaps a dire delight

In thirst of slaughter, and in lust of fight.

800

v. 795. *The best of things, beyond their measure, cloy.*]

These words comprehend a very natural sentiment, which perfectly shews the wonderful folly of men. They are soon wearied with the most agreeable things, when they are innocent, but never with the most toilsome things in the world, when unjust and criminal. Eustathius. Dacier.

v. 797. *The dance.*] In the original it is called *ἀνυμνὴ* the blameless dance ; to distinguish, says Eustathius, what sort of dancing it is that Homer commends. For there were two kinds of dancing practised among the ancients, the one reputable, invented by Minerva, or by Castor and Pollux ; the other dishonest, of which Pan, or Bacchus, was the author. They were distinguished by the name of the tragic, and the comic or satyric dance. But those which probably our author commends were certain military dances used by the greatest heroes. One of this sort was known to the Macedonians and Persians, practised by Antiochus the great, and the famous Polyperchon. There was another which was danced in complete armour, called the Pyrrhic, from Pyrrhicus the Spartan, its inventor, which continued in fashion among the Lacedæmonians. Scaliger the father remarks, that this dance was too laborious to remain long in use even among the ancients ; however it seems that labour could not discourage this bold critic from reviving that laudable kind of dance in the presence of the emperor Maximilian and his whole court. It is not to be doubted but the performance raised their admiration ;

This said, he seiz'd (while yet the carcass heav'd)  
 The bloody armour, which his train receiv'd:  
 Then sudden mix'd among the warring crew,  
 And the bold son of Pylæmenes slew.  
 Harpalion had through Asia travell'd far, 805  
 Following his martial father to the war:  
 Through filial love he left his native shore,  
 Never, ah never, to behold it more!  
 His unsuccessful spear he chanc'd to fling  
 Against the target of the Spartan king; 810  
 Thus of his lance disarm'd, from death he flies,  
 And turns around his apprehensive eyes.  
 Him, through the hip transpiercing as he fled,  
 The shaft of Merion mingled with the dead.  
 Beneath the bone the glancing point descends, 815  
 And driving down, the swelling bladder rends;  
 Sunk in his sad companions arms he lay,  
 And in short pantings sobb'd his soul away;  
 (Like some vile worm extended on the ground)  
 While life's red torrent gush'd from out the wound. 820

admiration; nor much to be wondered at, if they desired  
 to see more than once so extraordinary a spectacle, as we  
 have it in his own words. Poetices, 1. 1. c. 18. *Hanc*  
*saltationem [Pyrrhicam] nos et sæpe, et diu, coram*  
*Divo Maximiliano, jussu Bonifacii patruī, non sine*  
*stupore totius Germaniæ, representavimus.*

v. 819. *Like some vile worm extended on the ground.*  
 I cannot be of Eustathius's opinion, that this simile was  
 designed to debase the character of Harpalion, and to re-  
 present him in a mean and disgraceful view, as one who

Him on his car the Paphlagonian train  
 In slow procession bore from off the plain.  
 The pensive father, father now no more !  
 Attends the mournful pomp along the shore,

had nothing noble in him. I rather think from the character he gives of this young man, whose piety carried him to the wars to attend his father, and from the air of this whole passage, which is tender and pathetic, that he intended this humble comparison only as a mortifying picture of human misery and mortality. As to the verses which Eustathius alledges for a proof of the cowardice of Harpalion,

Ἄψ δ' ἐτάρων εἰς ἔθνος ἐχαΐετο κῆρ ἀμεινῶν  
 Πάλλοσε παπταίνων ;

The retreat described in the first verse is common to the greatest heroes in Homer ; the same words are applied to Deiphobus and Meriones in this book, and to Patroclus in the 16th, v. 817. of the Greek. The same thing, in other words, is said even of the great Ajax, Iliad 15. v. 728. And we have Ulysses described in the 4th, v. 497. with the same circumspection and fear of the darts : though none of these warriors have the same reason as Harpalion for their retreat or caution, he alone being unarmed, which circumstance takes away all imputation of cowardice.

v. 823. *The pensive father.*] We have seen, in the 5th Iliad, the death of Pylæmenes, general of the Paphlagonians : how comes he then in this place to be introduced as following the funeral of his son ? Eustathius informs us of a most ridiculous solution of some critics, who thought it might be the ghost of this unhappy father, who not being yet interred, according to the opinion of the ancients, wandered upon the earth. Zenodotus not satisfied with this, as indeed he had little reason to be, changed the name Pylæmenes into Ky-



And unavailing tears profusely shed, 825

And unreveng'd, deplor'd his offspring dead.

Paris from far the moving sight beheld,

With pity soften'd, and with fury swell'd :

His honour'd host, a youth of matchless grace.

And lov'd of all the Paphlagonian race ! 830

With his full strength he bent his angry bow,

And wing'd the feather'd vengeance at the foe.

A chief there was, the brave Euchenor nam'd,

For riches much, and more for virtue fam'd,

Who held his feat in Corinth's stately town ; 835

Polydus' son, a peer of old renown.

Oft' had the father told his early doom,

By arms abroad, or slow disease at home :

He climb'd his vessel, prodigal of breath.

And chose the certain, glorious path to death. 840

læmenes. Didymus thinks there were two of the same name : as there are in Homer two Schedius's, two Eurymedon's, and three Adrastus's. And others correct the verse by adding a negative, *μετὰ δ' ἔσφι πατρὸς νιῆς* ; *his father did not follow his chariot with his face bathed in tears*. Which last, if not of more weight than the rest, is yet more ingenious. Eustathius. Dacier.

*Nor did his valiant father, now no more,  
Pursue the mournful pomp along the shore,  
No fire surviv'd, to grace th' untimely bier,  
Or sprinkle the cold ashes with a tear.*

v. 840. *And chose the certain, glorious path to death.*] Thus we see Euchenor is like Achilles, who failed to Troy, though he knew he should fall before it : this

Beneath his ear the pointed arrow went ;  
 The soul came issuing at the narrow vent :  
 His limbs, unnerv'd, drop useless on the ground,  
 And everlasting darkness shades him round.

Nor knew great Hector how his legions yield, 845  
 (Wrapt in the cloud and tumult of the field)  
 Wide on the left the force of Greece commands,  
 And conquest hovers o'er th' Achaian bands :

might somewhat have prejudiced the character of Achilles, every branch of which ought to be single, and superior to all others, as he ought to be without a rival in every thing that speaks a hero: therefore we find two essential differences between Euchenor and Achilles, which preserve the superiority of the hero of the poem. Achilles, if he had not failed to Troy, had enjoyed a long life; but Euchenor had been soon cut off by some cruel disease. Achilles being independent, and as a king, could have lived at ease at home, without being obnoxious to any disgrace; but Euchenor being but a private man, must either have gone to the war, or been exposed to an ignominious penalty. Eustathius. Dacier.

v. 845. *Nor knew great Hector, etc.*] Most part of this book being employed to describe the brave resistance the Greeks made on their left under Idomeneus and Meriones; the poet now shifts the scene, and returns to Hector, whom he left in the center of the army, after he had passed the wall, endeavouring in vain to break the phalanx where Ajax commanded. And that the reader might take notice of this change of place, and carry distinctly in his mind each scene of action, Homer is very careful in the following lines to let us know that Hector still continues in the place where he had first passed the wall, at that part of it which was lowest, (as appears from Sarpedon's having pulled down

With such a tide superior virtue sway'd,  
 And † he that shakes the solid earth, gave aid. 850  
 But in the centre Hector fix'd remain'd,  
 Where first the gates were forc'd, and bulwarks gain'd;  
 There, on the margin of the hoary deep,  
 (Their naval station where th' Ajaces keep,  
 And where low walls confine the beating tides, 855  
 Whose humble barrier scarce the foes divides;  
 Where late in fight, both foot and horse engag'd,  
 And all the thunder of the battle rag'd)  
 There join'd, the whole Bœotian strength remains,-  
 The proud Ionians with their sweeping trains, 860  
 Locrians and Phthians, and th' Epæan force;  
 But join'd, repel not Hector's fiery course.

† Neptune.

one of its battlements on foot, *lib.* 12.) and which was nearest the station where the ships of Ajax were laid, because that hero was probably thought a sufficient guard for that part. As the poet is so very exact in describing each scene as in a chart or plan, the reader ought to be careful to trace each action in it; otherwise he will see nothing but confusion in things which are in themselves very regular and distinct. This observation is the more necessary, because even in this place, where the poet intended to prevent any such mistake, Dacier, and other interpreters, have applied to the present action what is only a recapitulation of the time and place described in the former book.

v. 861. *Phthians.*] The Phthians are not the troops of Achilles, for these were called Phthiotes; but they were the troops of Proteusilaus and Philoctetes. Eu-  
 statheus.

The flow'r of Athens, Stichius, Phidas led,  
Bias, and great Menestheus at their head.

Meges the strong th' Epeian bands controul'd, 865

And Dracius prudent, and Amphion bold ;

The Phthians Medon, fam'd for martial might, ;

And brave Podarces, active in the fight.

This drew from Phylacus his noble line ;

Iphiclus' son : and that, Oileus, thine : 870

( Young Ajax' brother, by a stol'n embrace ;

He dwelt far distant from his native place,

By his fierce stepdame from his father's reign

Expell'd and exil'd, for her brother slain.)

These rule the Phthians, and their arms employ 875

Mixt with Bœotians, on the shores of Troy.

Now side by side, with like unweary'd care,

Each Ajax labour'd through the field of war.

So when two lordly bulls, with equal toil,

Force the bright plowshare through the fallow soil, 880

Join'd to one yoke, the stubborn earth they tear,

And trace large furrows with the shining share ;

O'er their huge limbs the foam descends in snow,

And streams of sweat down their four foreheads flow,

v. 879. *So when two lordly bulls, etc.*] The image here given of the Ajaces is very lively and exact ; there being no circumstance of their present condition that is not to be found in the comparison ; and no particular in the comparison that does not resemble the action of the heroes. Their strength and labour, their unanimity and nearness to each other, the difficulties they struggle against, and the sweat occasioned by the struggling, perfectly corresponding with the simile.

A train of heroes follow'd through the field, 885  
 Who bore by turns great Ajax' sev'nfold shield;  
 Whene'er he breath'd, remissive of his might,  
 Tir'd with th'incessant slaughters of the fight:  
 No following troops his brave associate grace,  
 In close engagement an unpractis'd race, 890  
 The Locrian squadrons nor the jav'lin wield,  
 Nor bear the helm, nor lift the moony shield;  
 But skill'd from far the flying shaft to wing,  
 Or whirl the sounding pebble from the sling,  
 Dext'rous with these they aim a certain wound, 895  
 Or fell the distant warrior to the ground.  
 Thus in the van, the Telamonian train  
 Throng'd in bright arms, a pressing fight maintain;  
 Far in the rear the Locrian archers lie,  
 Whose stones and arrows intercept the sky, 900  
 The mingled tempest on the foes they pour;  
 Troy's scatt'ring orders open to the show'r.  
 Now had the Greeks eternal fame acquir'd,  
 And the gall'd Ilians to their walls retir'd;  
 But sage Polydamas, discreetly brave, 910  
 Address'd great Hector, and this counsel gave.  
 Though great in all, thou seem'st averse to lend  
 Impartial audience to a faithful friend;  
 To gods and men thy matchless worth is known,  
 And ev'ry art of glorious war thy own; 915  
 But in cool thought and counsel to excel,  
 How widely differs this from warring well!

Content with what the bounteous gods have giv'n,  
Seek not alone t'engross the gifts of heav'n.

+ To some the pow'rs of bloody war belong, 915

+ To some, sweet music, and the charm of song ;

+ To few, and wond'rous few, has Jove assign'd

+ A wife, extensive, all-confid'ring mind ;

+ Their guardians these, the nations round confess,

+ And towns and empires for their safety blest. 920

If heav'n have lodg'd this virtue in my breast,

Attend, O Hector, what I judge the best.

See as thou mov'st, on dangers dangers spread,

And war's whole fury burns around thy head.

Behold ! distress'd within yon' hostile wall, 925

How many Trojans yield, disperse, or fall !

What troops, out-number'd, scarce the war maintain !

And what brave heroes at the ships lie slain !

Here cease thy fury ; and the chiefs and kings

Convok'd to council, weigh the sum of things. 930

Whether (the Gods succeeding our desires)

To yon' tall ships to bear the Trojan fires ;

Or quit the fleet, and pass unhurt away,

Contented with the conquest of the day.

I fear, I fear, least Greece, not yet undone, 935

Pay the large debt of last revolving sun ;

Achilles, great Achilles, yet remains

On yonder decks, and yet o'erlooks the plains !

v. 937. *Achilles, great Achilles, yet remains*

*On yonder decks, and yet o'erlooks the plains.]*

There never was a nobler encomium than this of Achil-



The counsel pleas'd; and Hector, with a bound,  
 Leap'd from his chariot on the trembling ground;  
 Swift as he leap'd, his clanging arms resound. 940

les. It seems enough to so wise a counsellor as Polydamas, to convince so intrepid a warrior as Hector, in how great dangers the Trojans stood, to say, *Achilles sees us*. "Though he abstains from the fight, he still casts his eye on the battle; it is true, we are a brave army, and yet keep our ground, but still Achilles sees us, and we are not safe." This reflection makes him a god, a single regard of whom can turn the fate of armies, and determine the destiny of a whole people. And how nobly is this thought extended in the progress of the poem, where we shall see, in the 16th book, the Trojans fly at the first sight of his armour, worn by Patroclus; and in the 18th their defeat compleated by his sole appearance, unarmed on his ship.

v. 939. ——— *Hector, with a bound,*

*Leap'd from his chariot* ——— ]

Hector having in the last book alighted, and caused the Trojans to leave their chariots behind them, when they pass the trench, and no mention of any chariot but that of Asius since occurring in the battle; we must necessarily infer, either that Homer has neglected to mention the advance of the chariots, (a circumstance which should not have been omitted) or else, that he is guilty here of a great mistake in making Hector leap from his chariot. I think it evident, that this is really a slip of the poet's memory: for in this very book, v. 533. (of the original) we see Polites leads off his wounded brother to the place where his chariot remained behind the army. And again, in the next book, Hector being wounded, is carried out of the battle, in his soldiers arms, to the place where his horses and chariot waited at a distance from the battle.

To guard this post, he cry'd, thy art employ,  
And here detain the scatter'd youth of Troy ;

———— Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐταῖροι  
Χερσὶν ἀείραντες φέρον ἐκ πόνου, ὅρρ' ἰκεθ' ἱππεὺς  
Ωκέας οἱ οἱ ὀπισθε μάχης ἠδὲ πολέμοιο  
Ἔεσαν————

Lib. 14. ver. 428.

But what puts it beyond dispute, that the chariots continued all this time in the place where they first quitted them, is a passage in the beginning of the 15th book, where the Trojans being overpowered by the Grecians, fly back over the wall and trench, 'till they came to the place where their chariots stood,

Οἱ μὲν δὲ παρ' ὅχεσφιν ἐρητύοντο μένοντες.

Lib 15. ver. 3.

Neither Eustathius nor Dacier have taken any notice of this incongruity, which would tempt one to believe they were willing to overlook what they could not excuse. I must honestly own my opinion, that there are several other negligences of this kind in Homer. I cannot think otherwise of the passage in the present book, concerning Pylæmenes, notwithstanding the excuses of the commentators which are there given. The very using the same name in different places for different persons, confounds the reader in the story, and is what certainly would be better avoided : so that it is to no purpose to say, there might as well be two Pylæmenes's as two Schedius's, two Eurymedon's, two Ophelestes's, etc. since it is more blameable to be negligent in many instances than in one. Virgil is not free from this, as Macrobius has observed, Sat. l. 5. c. 15. But the abovementioned names are proofs of that critic's being greatly mistaken in affirming that Homer is not guilty of the same. It is one of those many errors he was led into, by his partiality to Homer above Virgil.

Where yonder heroes faint, I bend my way,  
And hasten back to end the doubtful day.

945

This said, the tow'ring chief prepares to go,  
Shakes his white plumes that to the breezes flow,  
And seems a moving mountain topt with snow.

Through all his host, inspiring force, he flies,  
And bids anew the martial thunder rise.

950

To Panthus' son, at Hector's high command,  
Haste the bold leaders of the Trojan band :

But round the battlements, and round the plain,  
For many a chief he look'd, but look'd in vain ;

Deiphobus, nor Helenus the seer,

955

Nor Asius' son, nor Asius' self appear.

For these were pierc'd with many a ghastly wound,

Some cold in death, some groaning on the ground ;

v. 948. *And seems a moving mountain topt with snow.*] This simile is very short in the original, and requires to be opened a little to discover its full beauty. I am not of M. Dacier's opinion, that the lustre of Hector's armour was that which furnished Homer with this image ; it seems rather to allude to the plume upon his helmet, in the action of shaking which, this hero is so frequently painted by our author, and from thence distinguished by the remarkable epithet *κορυβαίολος*. This is a very pleasing image, and very much what painters call *picturesque*. I fancy it gave the hint for a very fine one in Spenser, where he represents the person of Contemplation in the figure of a venerable old man almost consumed with study.

*His snowy locks adown his shoulders spread,  
As hoary frost with spangles doth attire  
The mossy branches of an oak half dead.*

Some low in dust, a mournful object, lay,  
High on the wall some breath'd their souls away. 960

Far on the left, amid the throng he found  
(Cheering the troops, and dealing deaths around)  
The graceful Paris; whom, with fury mov'd,  
Opprobrious, thus, th' impatient chief reprov'd.

Ill-fated Paris! slave to womankind, 965  
As smooth of face as fraudulent of mind!  
Where is Deiphobus, where Asius gone?  
The godlike father, and th' intrepid son?  
The force of Helenus, dispensing fate,  
And great Orthryoneus so fear'd of late? 970  
Black fate hangs o'er thee from the avenging gods,  
Imperial Troy from her foundations nods;  
Whelm'd in thy country's ruins shalt thou fall,  
And one devouring vengeance swallow all.

When Paris thus: My brother and my friend, 975  
Thy warm impatience makes thy tongue offend.

v. 965. *Ill-fated Paris.*] The reproaches which Hector here casts on Paris, gives us the character of this hero, who in many things resembles Achilles; being (like him) unjust, violent, and impetuous, and making no distinction between the innocent and criminal. It is he who is obstinate in attacking the entrenchments, yet asks an account of those who were slain in the attack from Paris; and though he ought to blame himself for their deaths, yet he speaks to Paris, as if, through his cowardice, he had suffered these to be slain, whom he might have preserved if he had fought courageously. Eustathius.

In other battles I deserv'd thy blame,  
 Though then not deedless, nor unknown to fame :  
 But since yon' rampart by thy arms lay low,  
 I scatter'd slaughter from my fatal bow. 980

The chiefs you seek on yonder shore lie slain ;  
 Of all those heroes, two alone remain ;  
 Deiphobus, and Helenus the seer :  
 Each now disabled by a hostile spear.

Go then, successful, where thy soul inspires : 985  
 This heart and hand shall second all thy fires :  
 What with this arm I can, prepare to know,  
 Till death for death be paid, and blow for blow.  
 But 'tis not ours, with forces not our own +  
 To combat ; strength is of the gods alone. 990 +

These words the hero's angry mind assuage :  
 Then fierce they mingle where the thickest rage.  
 Around Polydamas, distain'd with blood,  
 Cebrion, Phalces, stern Orthæus stood,  
 Palmus, with Polypœtus the divine, 995  
 And two bold brothers of Hippotion's line :  
 (Who reach'd fair Ilion, from Ascania far,  
 The former day ; the next engag'd in war.)  
 As when from gloomy clouds a whirlwind springs,  
 That bears Jove's thunder on its dreadful wings, 1000  
 Wide o'er the blasted fields the tempests sweep,  
 Then gather'd, settles on the hoary deeps ;

'Th' afflicted deeps tumultuous mix and rore ;  
 The waves behind impel the waves before,  
 Wide-rolling, foaming high, and tumbling to the shore,  
 Thus rank on rank the thick battalions throng, 1006  
 Chief urg'd on chief, and man drove man along :  
 Far o'er the plains in dreadful order bright,  
 The brazen arms reflect a beamy light.  
 Full in the blazing van great Hector shin'd, 1010  
 Like Mars commission'd to confound mankind.  
 Before him flaming, his enormous shield,  
 Like the broad sun, illumin'd all the field :  
 His nodding helm emits a streamy ray :  
 His piercing eyes through all the battle stray, 1015  
 And, while beneath his targe he flash'd along,  
 Shot terrors round, that wither'd ev'n the strong.

Thus stalk'd he, dreadful ; death was in his look ;  
 Whole nations fear'd : but not an Argive shook.  
 The tow'ring Ajax, with an ample stride 1020  
 Advanc'd the first, and thus the chief defy'd.

Hector ! come on, thy empty threats forbear :  
 'Tis not thy arm, 'tis thund'ring Jove we fear :  
 The skill of war to us not idly giv'n,  
 Lo ! Greece is humbled not by Troy, but heav'n. 1025

v. 1005. *Wide-rolling, foaming high, and tumbling to the shore.* ] I have endeavoured in this verse to imitate the confusion and broken sound of the original, which images the tumult and roaring of many waters.

Κύματα παφλάζοντα, πολυφλοίβοιο Θάλασσης  
 Κρητὰ, Φαλαγγιώτα.



Vain are the hopes that haughty mind imparts,  
 To force our fleet: the Greeks have hands and hearts,  
 Long ere in flames our lofty navy fall,  
 Your boasted city, and your god-built wall  
 Shall sink beneath us, smothering on the ground; 1030  
 And spread a long, unmeasur'd ruin round.  
 The time shall come, when chas'd along the plain  
 Ev'n thou shalt call on Jove, and call in vain;  
 Ev'n thou shalt wish, to aid thy desp'rate course,  
 The wings of falcons for thy flying horse; 1035  
 Shalt run, forgetful of a warrior's fame,  
 While clouds of friendly dust conceal thy shame.

v. 1037. *Clouds of friendly dust.*] A critic might take occasion from hence, to speak of the exact time of the year in which the actions of the Iliad are supposed to have happened. And (according to the grave manner of a learned dissertator) begin by informing us, that he has found it must be the summer season, from the frequent mention made of clouds of dust: though what he discovers might be full as well inferred from common sense, the summer being the natural season for a campaign. However he should quote all these passages at large; and adding to the article of dust as much as he can find of the sweat of the heroes, it might fill three pages very much to his own satisfaction. It would look well to observe farther, that the fields are described flowery, Iliad 2. ver. 546. that the branches of a tamarisk-tree are flourishing, Iliad 10. ver. 537. that the warriors sometimes wash themselves in the sea, Iliad 10. ver. 674. and sometimes refresh themselves by cool breezes from the sea, Iliad 11. ver. 762. that Diomed sleeps out of his tent on the ground, Iliad 10. ver 170. that the flies are very busy about the dead body of Pa-

As thus he spoke, behold, in open view,  
 On sounding wings a dexter eagle flew.  
 To Jove's glad omen all the Grecians rise, 1040  
 And hail, with shouts, his progress through the skies:  
 Far-echoing clamours bound from side to side:  
 They ceas'd; and thus the chief of Troy reply'd.

troclus, Iliad 19. ver. 30. that Apollo covers the body of Hector with a cloud to prevent its being scorched, Iliad 23. All this would prove the very thing which was said at first, that it was summer. He might next proceed to enquire, what precise critical time of summer? And here the mention of new-made honey in Iliad 11. ver. 771. might be of great service in the investigation of this important matter: he would conjecture from hence, that it must be near the end of summer, honey being seldom taken till that time; to which having added the plague which rages in book 1. and remarked, that infections of that kind generally proceed from the extremest heats, which heats are not till near the autumn; the learned inquirer might hug himself in this discovery, and conclude with triumph.

If any one think this too ridiculous to have been ever put in practice, he may see what Bossu has done to determine the precise season of the Æneid, lib. 3. ch. 12. The memory of that learned critic failed him, when he produced as one of the proofs that it was autumn, a passage in the 6th book, where the fall of the leaf is only mentioned in a simile. He has also found out a beauty in Homer, which few even of his greatest admirers can believe he intended; which is, that to the violence and fury of the Iliad he artfully adapted the heat of summer, but to the Odyssey the cooler and maturer season of autumn, to correspond with the sedateness and prudence of Ulysses.

From whence this menace, this insulting strain?  
Enormous boaster! doom'd to vaunt in vain. 1045  
So may the gods on Hector life bestow,  
(Not that short life which mortals lead below,  
But such as those of Jove's high lineage born,  
The blue-ey'd maid, or he that gilds the morn)  
As this decisive day shall end the fame 1050  
Of Greece, and Argos be no more a name.  
And thou, imperious! if thy madness wait  
The lance of Hector, thou shalt meet thy fate:  
That giant corse, extended on the shore,  
Shall largely feast the fowls with fat and gore. 1055  
He said, and like a lion stalk'd along:  
With shouts incessant earth and ocean rung,  
Sent from his foll'wing host: the Grecian train  
With answ'ring thunders fill'd the echoing plain;  
A shout that tore heav'n's concave, and above 1060  
Shook the fix'd splendors of the throne of Jove.



# T H E

# I L I A D.

## B O O K   XIV.

### T H E   A R G U M E N T.

Juno deceives Jupiter by the girdle of Venus.

*NESTOR* sitting at the table with *Machaon*, is alarmed with the encreasing clamour of the war, and hastens to *Agamemnon*: on his way he meets that prince with *Diomed* and *Ulysses*, whom he informs of the extremity of the danger. *Agamemnon* proposes to make their escape by night, which *Ulysses* withstands: to which *Diomed* adds his advice, that, wounded as they were, they should go forth and encourage the army with their presence: which advice is pursued. Juno seeing the partiality of Jupiter to the Trojans, forms a design to over-reach him; she sets off her charms with the utmost care, and (the more surely to enchant him) obtains the magic girdle of Venus. She then applies herself to the god of Sleep, and, with some difficulty, persuades him to seal the eyes of Jupiter; this done, she goes to mount *Ida*, where the god at first sight is ravished with her beauty, sinks in her embraces, and is laid asleep. *Nephtune* takes advantage of his slumber, and succours the Greeks: *Hector* is struck to the ground with a prodigious stone by *Ajax*, and carried off from the battle: several actions succeed; till the Trojans, much distressed, are obliged to give way: the lesser *Ajax* signalizes himself in a particular manner.

**B**UT nor the genial feast, nor flowing bowl,  
 Could charm the cares of Nestor's watchful soul;  
 His startled ears th' encreasing cries attend;  
 Then thus, impatient, to his wounded friend.

What new alarm, divine Machaon, say, 5  
 What mixt events attend this mighty day?  
 Hark! how the shouts divide, and how they meet,  
 And now come full, and thicken to the fleet!  
 Here, with the cordial draught dispel thy care,  
 Let Hecamede the strength'ning bath prepare. 10

#### N O T E S.

The poet, to advance the character of Nestor, and give us a due esteem for his conduct and circumspection, represents him as deeply solicitous for the common good: in the very article of mirth or relaxation from the toils of war, he is all attention to learn the fate and issue of the battle: and through his long use and skill in martial events, he judges from the nature of the uproar still encreasing, that the fortune of the day is held no longer in suspense, but inclines to one side. Eustathius.

v. 1. *But nor the genial feast.*] At the end of the 11th book we left Nestor at the table with Machaon. The attack of the entrenchments, described through the 12th and 13th books, happened while Nestor and Machaon sat at the table; nor is there any improbability herein, since there is nothing performed in those two books, but what might naturally happen in the space of two hours. Homer constantly follows the thread of his narration, and never suffers his reader to forget the train of action, or the time it employs. Dacier.

v. 10. *Let Hecamede the bath prepare.*] The custom



Refresh thy wound, and cleanse the clotted gore;  
While I th' adventures of the day explore.

He said; and seizing Thrasimedes' shield,  
(His valiant offspring) hasten'd to the field;  
(That day, the son his father's buckler bore)      15  
Then snatch'd a lance, and issu'd from the door.

Soon as the prospect open'd to his view,  
His wounded eyes the scene of sorrow knew;  
Dire disarray! the tumult of the fight,  
The wall in ruins, and the Greeks in flight.      20

As when old Ocean's silent surface sleeps,  
The waves just heaving on the purple deeps;

of women officiating to men in the bath was usual in ancient times. Examples are frequent in the *Odyssæy*. And it is not at all more odd, or to be sneered at, than the custom now used in France, of valets de chambres dressing and undressing the ladies.

v. 21. *As when old Ocean's silent surface sleeps.*] There are no where more finished pictures of nature, than those which Homer draws in several of his comparisons. The beauty however of some of these will be lost to many, who cannot perceive the resemblance, having never had opportunity to observe the things themselves. The life of this description will be most sensible to those who have been at sea in a calm: in this condition the water is not entirely motionless, but swells gently in smooth waves, which fluctuate backwards and forwards in a kind of balancing motion: This state continues till a rising wind gives a determination to the waves, and rolls them one certain way. There is scarce any thing in the whole compass of nature that can more exactly represent the state of an irresolute mind, wavering between two different designs,

While yet th' expected tempest hangs on high,  
 Weighs down the cloud, and blackens in the sky,  
 The mass of waters will no wind obey; 25  
 Jove sends one gust, and bids them roll away.  
 While wav'ring counsels thus his mind engage,  
 Fluctuates in doubtful thought the Pylian sage;  
 To join the host, or to the gen'ral haste,  
 Debating long, he fixes on ~~the~~ the last: 30

sometimes inclining to the one, sometimes to the other, and then moving to that point to which its resolution is at last determined. Every circumstance of this comparison is both beautiful and just; and it is the more to be admired, because it is very difficult to find sensible images proper to represent the motions of the mind; wherefore we but rarely meet with such comparisons even in the best poets. There is one of great beauty in Virgil, upon a subject very like this, where he compares his hero's mind, agitated with a great variety, and quick succession of thoughts, to a dancing light reflected from a vessel of water in motion.

*Cuncta videns, magno curarum fluctuat aestu,  
 Atque animum, nunc huc, celerem, nunc dividit illuc,  
 In partesque rapit varias, perque omnia versat.  
 Sicut aquæ tremulum labris ubi lumen ahenis  
 Sole percussum, aut radiantis imagine lunæ,  
 Omnia pervolat late loca; jamque sub auras  
 Erigitur, summique ferit laquearia tecti.*

Æn. lib. 8. v. 19.

v. 30. *He fixes on the last.*] Nestor appears in this place a great friend to his prince; for upon deliberating whether he should go through the body of the Grecian host, or else repair to Agamemnon's tent; he deter-

Yet, as he moves, the fight his bosom warms ;  
 The field rings dreadful with the clang of arms ;  
 The gleaming faulchions flash, the jav'lines fly ;  
 Blows echo blows, and all or kill, or die.

Him, in his march, the wounded princes meet,      35  
 By tardy steps ascending from the fleet.

The king of men, Ulysses the divine,  
 And who to Tydeus owes his noble line.  
 (Their ships at distance from the battle stand,  
 In lines advanc'd along the shelving strand ;      40

mines at last, and judges it the best way to go to the latter. Now, because it had been ill concerted to have made a man of his age walk a great way round about in quest of his commander, Homer has ordered it so, that he should meet Agamemnon in his way thither. And nothing could be better imagined than the reason, why the wounded princes left their tents ; they were impatient to behold the battle, anxious for its success, and desirous to inspirit the soldiers by their presence. The poet was obliged to give a reason ; for in epic poetry, as well as in dramatic, no person ought to be introduced without some necessity, or at least some probability, for his appearance. Eustathius.

v. 39. *Their ships at distance, etc.*] Homer being always careful to distinguish each scene of action, gives a very particular description of the station of the ships, shewing in what manner they lay drawn up on the land. This he had only hinted at before ; but here taking occasion on the wounded heroes coming from their ships, which were at a distance from the fight (while others were engaged in the defence of those ships where the wall was broken down) he tells us, that the shore of the bay, comprehended between the Rhætean and Sigæ-

Whose bay, the fleet unable to contain  
 At length, beside the margin of the main,  
 Rank above rank, the crouded ships they moor;  
 Who landed first lay highest on the shore.)  
 Supported on their spears, they took their way, 45  
 Unfit to fight, but anxious for the day.

an promontories, was not sufficient to contain the ships in one line: which they were therefore obliged to draw up in ranks, ranged in parallel lines along the shore. How many of these lines there were, the poet does not determine. M. Dacier, without giving any reason for her opinion, says they were but two; one advanced near the wall, the other on the verge of the sea. But it is more than probable, that there were several intermediate lines; since the order in which the vessels lay is here described by a metaphor taken from the steps of a scaling-ladder, which had been no way proper to give an image only of two ranks, but very fit to represent a greater, though undetermined number. That there were more than two lines, may likewise be inferred from what we find in the beginning of the 11th book; where it is said, that the voice of Discord standing on the ship of Ulysses, *in the middle of the fleet*, was heard as far as the stations of Achilles and Ajax, *whose ships were drawn up in the two extremities*: those of Ajax were nearest the wall (as is expressly said in the 682d verse of the 13th book, in the original,) and those of Achilles nearest the sea, as appears from many passages scattered through the Iliad.

It must be supposed, that those ships were drawn highest upon land, which first approached the shore; the first line therefore consisted of those who first disembarked, which were the ships of Ajax and Protefilaus; the latter of whom seems mentioned in the verse above-cited of the 13th book, *only to give occasion to observe*

serve

Nestor's approach alarm'd each Grecian breast,  
Whom thus the gen'ral of the host address.

O grace and glory of th'Achaian name !  
What drives thee, Nestor, from the field of fame ?      50  
Shall then proud Hector see his boast fulfill'd,  
Our fleets in ashes, and our heroes kill'd ?  
Such was his threat, ah ! now too soon made good,  
On many a Grecian bosom writ in blood.  
Is ev'ry heart inflam'd with equal rage      55  
Against your king, nor will one chief engage ?  
And have I liv'd to see with mournful eyes  
In ev'ry Greek a new Achilles rise ?

serve this, for he was slain as he landed first of the Greeks. And accordingly we shall see in the 15th book, it is his ship that is first attacked by the Trojans, as it lay the nearest to them.

We may likewise guess how it happens, that the ships of Achilles were placed nearest to the sea; for in the answer of Achilles to Ulysses in the 9th book, v. 432. he mentions a naval expedition he had made while Agamemnon, lay safe in the camp: so that his ships at their return did naturally lie next the sea; which, without this consideration, might appear a station not so becoming this hero's courage.

v. 47. *Nestor's approach alarm'd.*] That so laborious a person as Nestor has been described, so indefatigable, so little indulgent of his extreme age, and one that never receded from the battle, should approach to meet them; this it was that struck the princes with amazement, when they saw he had left the field. Eustathius.

Gerenian Nestor then. So fate has will'd ;  
 And all-confirming time has fate fulfill'd. 60  
 Not he that thunders from the aerial bow'r,  
 Not Jove himself, upon the past has pow'r.  
 The wall, our late inviolable bound,  
 And best defence, lies smoking on the ground :  
 Ev'n to the ships their conqu'ring arms extend, 65  
 And groans of slaughter'd Greeks to heav'n ascend,  
 On speedy measures then employ your thought ;  
 In such distress, if counsel profit ought ;  
 Arms cannot much : though Mars our souls incite ;  
 These gaping wounds with-hold us from the fight. 70  
 To him the monarch. That our army bends,  
 That Troy triumphant our high fleet ascends,  
 And that the rampart, late our surest trust,  
 And best defence, lies smoaking in the dust :  
 All this from Jove's afflictive hand we bear, 75  
 Who, far from Argos, wills our ruin here.  
 Past are the days when happier Greece was blest,  
 And all his favour, all his aid confess ;  
 Now heav'n averse, our hands from battle ties,  
 And lifts the Trojan glory to the skies. 80  
 Cease we at length to waste our blood in vain,  
 And launch what ships lie nearest to the main ;

v. 81. *Cease we at length, etc.*] Agamemnon either does not know what course to take in this distress, or only sounds the sentiments of his nobles, (as he did in the second book, of the whole army.) He delivers himself after Nestor's speech, as it became a counsellor



Leave those at anchor till the coming night :  
 Then, if impetuous Troy forbear the fight,  
 Bring all to sea, and hoist each sail for flight.  
 Better from evils, well foreseen, to run,  
 Than perish in the danger we may shun.

85

+

+

to do : but knowing this advice to be dishonourable, and unsuitable to the character he assumes elsewhere *ἰδρώσει μὲν τοι Τελαμών*, etc. and considering that he should do no better than abandon his post, when before he had threatened the deserters with death ; he reduces his counsel into the form of a proverb, disguising it as handsomely as he can under a sentence. *It is better to shun an evil*, etc. It is observable too how he has qualified the expression : he does not say, to *shun the battle*, for that had been unsoldierly ; but he softens the phrase, and calls it, *to shun evil* : and this word *evil* he applies twice together, in advising them to leave the engagement.

It is farther remarked, that this was the noblest opportunity for a general to try the temper of his officers ; for he knew that in a calm of affairs, it was common with most people, either out of flattery or respect, to submit to their leaders : but in imminent danger fear does not bribe them, but every one discovers his very soul, valuing all other considerations, in regard to his safety, but in the second place. He knew the men he spoke to were prudent persons, and not easy to cast themselves into a precipitate flight. He might likewise have a mind to recommend himself to his army by the means of his officers ; which he was not very able to do of himself, angry as they were at him, for the affront he had offered Achilles, and by consequence thinking him the author of all their present calamities. Eustathius.

Thus he. The sage Ulysses thus replies,  
 While anger flash'd from his disdainful eyes,  
 What shameful words, unkingly as thou art, 90  
 Fall from that trembling tongue, and tim'rous heart?  
 Oh were thy sway the curse of meaner pow'rs,  
 And thou the shame of any host but ours!  
 A host, by Jove endu'd with martial might,  
 And taught to conquer, or to fall in fight: 95  
 Advent'rous combates and bold wars to wage,  
 Employ'd our youth, and yet employs our age.  
 And wilt thou thus desert the Trojan plain?  
 And have whole streams of blood been spilt in vain?  
 In such base sentence if thou couch thy fear, 100  
 Speak it in whispers, lest a Greek should hear.  
 Lives there a man so dead to fame, who dares  
 To think such meanness, or the thought declares?  
 And comes it ev'n from him whose sov'reign sway  
 The banded legions of all Greece obey? 105

v. 92. *Oh were thy sway the curse of meaner pow'rs,  
 And thou the shame of any host but ours.]*

This is a noble complement to his country and to the Grecian army, to shew that it was an impossibility for them to follow even their general in any thing that was cowardly, or shameful; though the lives and safeties of them all were concerned in it.

v. 104. *And comes it ev'n from him whose sov'reign sway  
 The banded legions of all Greece obey.]*

As who should say, that another man might indeed have uttered the same advice, but it could not be a person of prudence; or if he had prudence, he could not be a governor, but a private man; or if a governor, yet

Is this a gen'ral's voice, that calls to flight,  
 While war hangs doubtful, while his soldiers fight ?  
 What more could Troy ? What yet their fate denies  
 Thou giv'st the foe : all Greece becomes their prize.  
 No more the troops, (our hoisted sails in view. 110  
 Themselves abandon'd) shall the fight pursue,  
 Thy ships first flying with despair shall see,  
 And owe destruction to a prince like thee.

Thy just reproofs, Atrides calm replies,  
 Like arrows pierce me, for thy words are wise. 115  
 Unwilling as I am to lose the host,  
 I force not Greece to quit this hateful coast.  
 Glad, I submit, whoe'er, or young, or old,  
 Ought, more conducive to our weal, unfold.

Tydidēs cut him short, and thus began. 120  
 Such counsel if you seek, behold the man.

one who had not a well-disciplined and obedient army ;  
 or lastly, if he had an army so conditioned, yet it could  
 not be so large and numerous a one as that of Agamem-  
 non. This is a fine climax, and of wonderful strength.  
 Eustathius.

v. 118.—[*Whoe'er, or young, or old, etc.*] This  
 nearly resembles an ancient custom at Athens, where, in  
 times of trouble and distress, every one, of what age or  
 quality soever, was invited to give in his opinion with  
 freedom, by the public cryer. Eustathius.

v. 120] This speech of Diomed is naturally intro-  
 duced, beginning with an answer, as if he had been cal-  
 led upon to give his advice. The counsel he proposes  
 was that alone which could be of any real service in  
 their present exigency : however, since he ventures to.

Who boldly gives it, and what he shall say,  
 Young though he be, disdain not to obey :  
 A youth, who from the mighty Tydeus springs,  
 May speak to councils and assembled kings. 125  
 Hear then in me the great Oenides' son,  
 Whose honour'd dust, his race of glory run,  
 Lies whelm'd in ruins of the Theban wall ;  
 Brave in his life, and glorious in his fall.  
 With three bold sons was gen'rous Prothous blest, 130  
 Who Pleuron's walls and Calydon possess ;  
 Melas and Agrius, but (who far surpass  
 The rest in courage) Oeneus was the last.  
 From him, my fire. From Calydon expell'd,  
 He past to Argos, and in exile dwell'd ; 135

advise where Ulysses is at a loss, and Nestor himself silent, he thinks it proper to apologize for this liberty by reminding them of his birth and descent, hoping thence to add to his counsel a weight and authority which he could not from his years and experience. It cannot indeed be denied that this historical digression seems more out of season than any of the same kind which we so frequently meet with in Homer, since his birth and parentage must have been sufficiently known to all at the siege, as he here tells them. This must be owned a defect not altogether to be excused in the poet, but which may receive some alleviation, if considered as a fault of temperament. For he had certainly a strong inclination to genealogical stories, and too frequently takes occasion to gratify this humour.

v. 135. *He past to Argos.*] This is a very artful colour : he calls the flight of his father for killing one of his brothers, *travelling and dwelling at Argos*,

The monarch's daughter there (so Jove ordain'd)  
 He won, and flourish'd where Adrastus reign'd ;  
 There rich in fortune's gifts, his acres till'd,  
 Beheld his vines their liquid harvest yield,  
 And num'rous flocks that whiten'd all the field. 140  
 Such Tydeus was, the foremost once in fame !  
 Nor lives in Greece a stranger to his name.  
 Then, what for common good my thoughts inspire,  
 Attend, and in the son, respect the sire.  
 Though sore of battle, though with wounds oppress'd,  
 Let each go forth, and animate the rest, 146  
 Advance the glory which we cannot share,  
 Though not partaker, witness of the war.

without mentioning the cause and occasion of his retreat. What immediately follows (*so Jove ordained*) does not only contain in it a disguise of his crime, but is a just motive likewise for our compassion. Eustathius.

v. 146. *Let each go forth and animate the rest.*] It is worth a remark, with what management and discretion the poet has brought these four kings, and no more, towards the engagement, since these are sufficient alone to perform all that he requires. For Nestor proposes to them to enquire, if there be any way or means, which prudence can direct for their security. Agamemnon attempts to discover that method. Ulysses refutes him, as one whose method was dishonourable, but proposes no other project. Diomed supplies that deficiency, and shews what must be done : That, wounded as they are, they should go forth to the battle ; for though they were not able to engage, yet their presence would re-establish their affairs by detaining in arms those who might otherwise quit the field. This counsel is embraced, and readily obeyed by the rest. Eustathius.

But least new wounds on wounds o'erpow'r us quite,  
Beyond the missile jav'lin's sounding flight, 150  
Safe let us stand; and from the tumult far,  
Inspire the ranks, and rule the distant war.

He added not: The list'ning kings obey,  
Slow moving on; Atrides leads the way.  
The god of ocean, to inflame their rage, 155  
Appears a warrior furrow'd o'er with age;  
Prest in his own, the gen'ral's hand he took,  
And thus the venerable hero spoke.

Atrides, lo! with what disdainful eye  
Achilles sees his country's forces fly; 160  
Blind impious man! whose anger is his guide,  
Who glories in unutterable pride.  
So may he perish, so may Jove disclaim  
The wretch relentless, and o'erwhelm with shame!  
But heav'n forsakes not thee: O'er yonder sands 165  
Soon shalt thou view the scatter'd Trojan bands  
Fly diverse; while proud kings, and chiefs renown'd  
Driv'n heaps on heaps, with clouds involv'd around  
Of rolling dust, their winged wheels employ  
To hide their ignominious heads in Troy. 170

He spoke, then rush'd amid the warrior crew;  
And sent his voice before him as he flew,  
Loud, as the shout encount'ring armies yield,  
When twice ten thousand shake the lab'ring field;  
Such was the voice, and such the thund'ring sound  
Of him, whose trident rends the solid ground. 176



Each Argive bosom beats to meet the fight,  
And grizly war appears a pleasing sight.

Meantime Saturnia from Olympus' brow,  
High-thron'd in gold, beheld the fields below ; 180

v. 179. *The story of Jupiter and Juno.*] I do not know a bolder fiction in all antiquity, than this of Jupiter's being deceived and laid asleep, or that has a greater air of impiety and absurdity. It is an observation of Mons. de St. Evremond, upon the ancient poets, which every one will agree to : " That it is surprizing  
" enough to find them so scrupulous to preserve proba-  
" bility, in actions purely human ; and so ready to vi-  
" olate it in representing the actions of the gods. Even  
" those who having spoken more sagely than the rest,  
" of their nature, could not forbear to speak extrava-  
" gantly of their conduct. When they establish their  
" being and their attributes, they make them immor-  
" tal, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, and perfectly  
" good : but the moment they represent them acting,  
" there is no weakness to which they do not make  
" them stoop, and no folly or wickedness they do not  
" make them commit." The same author answers this in another place by remarking, " That truth was not  
" the inclination of the first ages : a foolish lye, or a  
" lucky falsehood gave reputation to impostors, and  
" pleasure to the credulous. It was the whole secret  
" of the great and the wise, to govern the simple and  
" ignorant herd. The vulgar, who pay a profound re-  
" verence to mysterious errors, would have despised plain  
" truth, and it was thought a piece of prudence to de-  
" ceive them. All the discourses of the ancients were  
" fitted to so advantageous a design. There was no-  
" thing to be seen but fictions, allegories, and simili-  
" tudes, and nothing was to appear as it was in itself." I must needs, upon the whole, as far as I can judge, give up the morality of this fable ; but what colour of

With joy the glorious conflict she survey'd,  
Where her great brother gave the Grecians aid.

excuse for it Homer might have from ancient tradition, or what mystical or allegorical sense might atone for the appearing impiety, is hard to be ascertained at this distant period of time. That there had been before his age a tradition of Jupiter's being laid asleep, appears from the story of Hercules at Coos, referred to by our author, ver. 285. There is also a passage in Diodorus, lib. 1. c. 7. which gives some small light to this fiction. Among other reasons which that historian lays down to prove that Homer travelled into Ægypt, he alleges this passage of the interview of Jupiter and Juno, which he says was grounded upon an Ægyptian festival, *whereon the nuptial ceremonies of these two deities were celebrated, at which time both their tabernacles, adorned with all sorts of flowers, are carried by the priests to the top of a high mountain.* Indeed as the greatest part of the ceremonies of the ancient religions consisted in some symbolical representations of certain actions of their gods, or rather deified mortals, so a great part of ancient poetry consisted in the description of the actions exhibited in those ceremonies. The loves of Venus and Adonis are a remarkable instance of this kind, which, though under different names, were celebrated by annual representations, as well in Ægypt as in several nations of Greece and Asia : and to the images which were carried in these festivals, several ancient poets were indebted for their most happy descriptions. If the truth of this observation of Diodorus be admitted, the present passage will appear with more dignity, being grounded on religion ; and the conduct of the poet will be more justifiable, if that, which has been generally counted an indecent, wanton fiction, should prove to be the representation of a religious solemnity. Considering the great ignorance we are in of many ancient ceremonies,

But plac'd aloft, on Ida's shady height  
She sees her Jove, and trembles at the sight.

there may be probably in Homer many incidents intirely of this nature ; wherefore we ought to be reserved in our censures, lest what we decry as wrong in the poet. should prove only a fault in his religion. And indeed it would be a very unfair way to tax any people, or any age whatever, with grossness in general, purely from the gross or absurd ideas or practices that are to be found in their religions.

In the next place, if we have recourse to allegory, which softens and reconciles every thing, it may be imagined, that, by the congress of Jupiter and Juno, is meant the mingling of the æther and the air, which are generally said to be signified by these two deities. The ancients believed the æther to be igneous, and that by its kind influence upon the air, it was the cause of all vegetation : to which nothing more exactly corresponds, than the fiction of the earth putting forth her flowers immediately upon this congress. Virgil has some lines in the second Georgic, that seem a perfect explanation of the fable into this sense. In describing the spring, he hints as if something of a vivifying influence was at that time spread from the upper heavens into the air. He calls Jupiter expressly Æther, and represents him operating upon his spouse for the production of all things.

*Tum pater omnipotens sæcundis imbribus æther  
Conjugis in gremio lætæ descendit, et omnes  
Magnus alit, magno commixtus corpore, fœtus.  
Parturit omnis ager, etc.*

But, be all this as it will, it is certain, that whatever may be thought of this fable in a theological or philosophical view, it is one of the most beautiful pieces that ever was produced by poetry. Neither does it want its

Jove to deceive, what methods shall she try, 185  
 What arts, to blind his all-beholding eye ?  
 At length she trusts her pow'r ; resolv'd to prove  
 ' The old, yet still successful, cheat of love ;'  
 Against his wisdom to oppose her charms,  
 And lull the Lord of thunders in her arms. 190  
 Swift to her bright apartment she repairs,  
 Sacred to dress, and beauty's pleasing cares :

moral : an ingenious modern writer (whom I am pleased to take any occasion of quoting) has given it us in these words.

“ This passage of Homer may suggest abundance of  
 “ instruction to a woman who has a mind to preserve or  
 “ recall the affection of her husband. The care of  
 “ her person and dress, with the particular blandish-  
 “ ments woven in the Cestus, are so plainly recommen-  
 “ ded by this fable, and so indispensably necessary in e-  
 “ very female who desires to please, that they need no  
 “ farther explanation. The discretion likewise in co-  
 “ vering all matrimonial quarrels from the knowledge of  
 “ others, is taught in the pretended visit to Tethys, in  
 “ the speech where Juno addresses herself to Venus ; as  
 “ the chaste and prudent management of a wife's charms  
 “ is intimated by the same pretence for her appearing  
 “ before Jupiter, and by the concealment of the Cestus  
 “ in her bosom. I shall leave this tale to the considera-  
 “ tion of such good housewives, who are never well dres-  
 “ sed but when they are abroad, and think it necessary  
 “ to appear more agreeable to all men living than their  
 “ husbands : as also to those prudent ladies, who, to a-  
 “ void the appearance of being over fond, entertain their  
 “ husbands with indifference, aversion, sullen silence, or  
 “ exasperating language.”

v. 191. *Swift to her bright apartment she repairs,*  
 etc.] This passage may be of consideration to the ladies,  
 and,

With skill divine had Vulcan form'd the bow'r,  
Safe from access of each intruding pow'r.

Touch'd with her secret key, the doors unfold;      195  
Self clos'd behind her shut the valves of gold.

Here first she bathes; and round her body pours  
Soft oils of fragrance, and ambrosial show'rs :

and, for their sakes, I take a little pains to observe upon it. Homer tells us that the very goddesses, who are all over charms, never dress in sight of any one: the queen of heaven adorns herself in private, and the doors lock after her. In Homer there are no *Dieux des Ruelles*, no gods are admitted to the toilette.

I am afraid there are some earthly goddesses of less prudence, who have lost much of the adoration of mankind by the contrary practice. Lucretius, a very good judge in gallantry, prescribes, as a cure to a desperate lover, the frequent sight of his mistress undressed. Juno herself has suffered a little by the very muses peeping into her chamber, since some nice critics are shocked in this place of Homer, to find that the goddess washes herself, which presents some idea as if she was dirty. Those who have delicacy will profit by this remark.

v. 193. *Soft oils of fragrance.*] The practice of Juno in anointing her body with perfumed oils, was a remarkable part of ancient Cosmetics, though entirely disused in the modern arts of dress. It may possibly offend the niceness of modern ladies; but such of them as paint, ought to consider, that this practice might, without much greater difficulty, be reconciled to cleanliness. This passage is a clear instance of the antiquity of this custom, and clearly determines against Pliny, who is of opinion that it was not so ancient as those times, where, speaking of perfumed unguents, he says, *Quis primus invenit, non traditur; Iliacis temporibus non erant*, lib. 13. cap. 1. Besides the custom of anointing kings



The winds perfum'd, the balmy gale convey  
 Through heav'n, through earth, and all th' aerial way :  
 Spirit divine ! whose exhalation greets 201  
 The sense of gods with more than mortal sweets.  
 Thus while she breath'd of heav'n, with decent pride  
 Her artful hands the radiant tresses ty'd ;

among the Jews, which the Christians have borrowed, there are several allusions in the old testament, which shew that this practice was thought ornamental among them. The Psalmist, speaking of the gifts of God, mentions wine and oil, the former to make glad the heart of man, and the latter to give him a cheerful countenance. It seems most probable that this was an eastern invention, agreeable to the luxury of the Asiatics, among whom the most proper ingredients for these unguents were produced ; from them this custom was propagated among the Romans, by whom it was esteemed a pleasure of a very refined nature. Whoever is curious to see instances of their expence and delicacy therein, may be satisfied in the three first chapters of the thirteenth book of Pliny's natural history.

v. 203. *Thus while she breath'd of heav'n, etc.*] We have here a complete picture from head to foot of the dress of the fair sex, and of the mode between two and three thousand years ago. May I have leave to observe the great simplicity of Juno's dress, in comparison with the innumerable equipage of the modern toilette ? The goddess, even when she is setting herself out on the greatest occasion, has only her own locks to tie, a white veil to cast over them, a mantle to dress her whole body, her pendants, and her sandals. This the poet expressly says was *all her dress* [πάντα κόσμον ;] and one may reasonable conclude, it was all that was used by the greatest princesses and finest beauties of those times. The good Eustathius is ravished to find, that here are



Part on her head in shining ringlets roll'd, 205

Part o'er her shoulders wav'd like melted gold.

no washes for the face, no dyes for the hair, and none of these artificial embellishments since in practice; he also rejoices not a little, that Juno has no looking-glass, tire-woman, or waiting-maid. One may preach till doomsday on this subject, but all the commentators in the world will never prevail upon a lady to stick one pin the less in her gown, except she can be convinced that the ancient dress will better set off her person.

As the Asiatics always surpassed the Grecians in whatever regarded magnificence and luxury, so we find their women far gone in the contrary extreme of dress. There is a passage in Isaiah, chap. iii. that gives us a particular of their wardrobe, with the number and uselessness of their ornaments; and which I think appears very well in contrast to this of Homer. *The bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon: the chains and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, the rings and nose-jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping-pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils.*

I could be glad to ask the ladies which they should like best to imitate, the Greeks or the Asiatics? I would desire those that are handsome and well-made, to consider, that the dress of Juno (which is the same they see in statues) has manifestly the advantage of the present, in displaying whatever is beautiful: that the charms of the neck and breast are not less laid open, than by the modern stays; and that those of the leg are more gracefully discovered, than even by the hoop-petticoat; that the fine turn of the arms is better observed; and that several natural graces of the shape and body ap-

Around her next a heav'nly mantle flow'd,  
 That rich with Pallas' labour'd colours glow'd :  
 Large clasps of gold the foldings gather'd round,  
 A golden zone her swelling bosom bound. 210  
 Far-beaming pendants tremble in her ear,  
 Each gem illumin'd with a triple star.  
 Then o'er her head she casts a veil more white  
 Than new-fall'n snow, and dazzling as the light.  
 Last her fair feet celestial sandals grace. 215  
 Thus issuing radiant, with majestic pace,

pear much more conspicuous. It is not to be denied but the Asiatic and our present modes were better contrived to conceal some people's defects, but I do not speak to such people : I speak only to ladies of that beauty, who can make any fashion prevail by their being seen in it ; and who put others of their sex under the wretched necessity of being like them in their habits, or not being like them at all. As for the rest, let them follow the mode of Judæa, and be content with the name of Asiatics.

v. 216. *Thus issuing radiant, etc.*] Thus the goddess comes from her apartment, against her spouse, in complete armour. The pleasures of women mostly prevail by pure cunning, and the artful management of their persons ; for there is but one way for the weak to subdue the mighty, and that is by pleasure. The poet shews, at the same time, that men of understanding are not mastered without a great deal of artifice and address. There are but three ways whereby to overcome another ; by violence, by persuasion, or by craft : Jupiter was invincible by main force ; to think of persuading was as fruitless, after he had passed his nod to Achilles ; therefore Juno was obliged of necessity to turn her thoughts intirely upon craft ; and by the force of plea-

Forth from the dome th' imperial goddess moves,  
And calls the mother of the Smiles and Loves.

sure it is, that she ensnares and manages the God. Eustathius.

v. 218. *And calls the mother of the Smiles and Loves*] Notwithstanding all the pains Juno has been at, to adorn herself, she is still conscious that neither the natural beauty of her person, nor the artificial one of her dress, will be sufficient to work upon a husband. She therefore has recourse to the Cestus of Venus, as a kind of love-charm, not doubting to inflame his mind by magical incantment; a folly which in all ages has possessed her sex. To procure this, she applies to the goddess of love; from whom hiding her real design under a feigned story, (another propriety in the character of the fair) she obtains the valuable present of this wonder-working girdle. The allegory of the Cestus lies very open, though the impertinencies of Eustathius on this head are unspeakable: in it are comprized the most powerful incentives to love, as well as the strongest effects of the passion. The just admiration of this passage has been always so great and universal, that the Cestus of Venus is become proverbial. The beauty of these lines, which, in a very few words, comprehends this agreeable fiction, can scarce be equalled: so beautiful an original has produced very fine imitations, wherein we may observe a few additional figures, expressing some of the improvements which the affectation, or artifice of the fair sex, have introduced into the art of love since Homer's days. Tasso has finely imitated this description in the magical girdle of Armida. *Gierusalemme Liberata. Cant. 16.*

*Teneri Sdegni, e placide e tranquille  
Repulse, e cari vezzi, e liete paci;  
Sorrisi, parrolette, e dolci stille  
Di pianto, e sospir tronchi, e molli baci.*

How long (to Venus thus apart she cry'd)  
Shall human strifes celestial minds divide? 220

Monsieur de la Motte's imitation of this fiction is likewise wonderfully beautiful.

*Ce tissu, le simbole, et la cause a la fois,  
Du pouvoir de l'amour, du charme de ses loix.  
Elle enflamme les yeux, de cet ardeur qui touche;  
D'un sourire enchanteur, elle anime la bouche;  
Passionne la voix, en adoucit les sons,  
Prete ces tours heureux, plus forts que les raisons;  
Inspire, pour toucher, ces tendres stratagemes,  
Ces refus attirans, l'ecueil des sages memes.  
Et la nature enfin, y voulut renfermer,  
Tout ce qui persuade, et ce qui fait aimer:  
En prenant ce tissu, que Venus lui presente,  
Junon n'etoit que belle, elle devient charmante.  
Les graces, et les ris, les plaisirs, et les jeux,  
Surpris cherchent Venus, doutent qui l'est des deux.  
L'amour meme trompe, trouve Junon plus belle;  
Et son arc a la main, deja vole apres elle.*

Spenser, in his fourth book, Canto 5th, describes a girdle of Venus of a very different nature; for this had the power to raise up loose desires in others, that had a wonderful faculty to suppress them in the person that wore it: but it had a most dreadful quality, to burst asunder whenever tied about any but a chaste bosom. Such a girdle, it is to be feared, would produce effects very different from the other: Homer's Cestus would be a peace-maker to reconcile man and wife; but Spenser's Cestus would probably destroy the good agreement of many a happy couple.

Ah yet ! will Venus aid Saturnia's joy,  
And set aside the cause of Greece and Troy ?

Let heav'n's dread empress, Cytheræa said,  
Speak her request, and deem her will obey'd.  
Then grant me, said the queen, those conqu'ring charms,  
That pow'r which mortals and immortals warms,    226  
That love, which melts mankind in fierce desires,  
And burns the sons of heav'n with sacred fires !

For lo ! I haste to those remote abodes,  
Where the great parents, sacred source of gods !  
Ocean and Tethys their old empire keep,    231  
On the last limits of the land and deep.  
In their kind arms my tender years were past ;  
What time old Saturn, from Olympus cast,  
Of upper heav'n to Jove resign'd the reign,    235  
Whelm'd under the huge mass of earth and main.  
For strife, I hear, has made the union cease,  
Which held so long that ancient pair in peace,  
What honour, and what love shall I obtain,  
If I compose those fatal feuds again !    240  
Once more their minds in mutual ties engage,  
And what my youth has ow'd, repay their age.

She said. With awe divine the queen of love  
Obey'd the sister and the wife of Jove :  
And from her fragrant breast the zone unbrac'd,    245  
With various skill, and high embroidery grac'd,  
In this was ev'ry art, and ev'ry charm,  
To win the wisest, and the coldest warm :



Fond love, the gentle vow, the gay desire,

The kind deceit, the still-reviving fire,

250

Perfuasive speech, and more perfuasive sighs,

Silence that spoke, and eloquence of eyes.

This on her hand the Cyprian goddess laid;

Take this, and with it all thy wish, she said:

With smiles she took the charm; and smiling prest 255

The pow'rful Cestus to her snowy breast.

Then Venus to the courts of Jove withdrew;

Whilst from Olympus pleas'd Saturnia flew,

O'er high Pieria thence her course she bore,

O'er fair Emathia's ever-pleasing shore,

260

O'er Hæmus' hills with snows eternal crown'd;

Nor once her flying foot approach'd the ground.

Then taking wing from Athos' lofty steep,

She speeds to Lemnos o'er the rolling deep,

And seeks the cave of Death's half-brother, Sleep.

v. 255.—*And prest the pow'rful Cestus to her snowy breast.*] Eustathius takes notice that the word *Cestus* is not the name, but epithet only, of Venus's girdle; tho' the epithet has prevailed so far as to become the proper name in common use. This has happened to others of our author's epithets; the word *Pygmy* is of the same nature. Venus wore this girdle below her neck, and in open sight, but Juno hides it in her bosom, to shew the difference of the two characters: it suits well with Venus to make a shew of whatever is engaging in her; but Juno, who is a matron of prudence and gravity, ought to be more modest.

v. 264. *She speeds to Lemnos o'er the rolling deep,*

*And seeks the cave of Death's half-brother, Sleep]*

In this fiction Homer introduces a new divine personage:



It does not appear whether this god of Sleep was a god of Homer's creation, or whether his pretensions to divinity were of more ancient date. The poet indeed speaks of him as of one formerly active in some heavenly transactions. Be this as it will, succeeding poets have always acknowledged his title. Virgil would not let his *Æneid* be without a person so proper for poetical machinery; though he has employed him with much less art than his master, since he appears in the fifth book without provocation or commission, only to destroy the Trojan pilot. The critics, who cannot see all the allegories which the commentators pretend to find in Homer's divinities, must be obliged to acknowledge the reality and propriety of this; since every thing that is here said of this imaginary deity is justly applicable to sleep. He is called the *brother of Death*; said to be protected by Night; and is employed very naturally to lull a husband to rest in the embraces of his wife; which effect of this conjugal opiate, even the modest Virgil has remarked in the persons of Vulcan and Venus, probably with an eye to this passage of Homer:

—*Placidumque petivit*

*Conjugis infusus gremio per membra soporem.*

v. 264. *To Lemnos.*] The commentators are hard put to it, to give a reason why Juno seeks for Sleep in Lemnos. Some finding out that Lemnos anciently abounded with wine, inform us that it was a proper place of residence for him, wine being naturally a great provoker of sleep. Others will have it, that this god being in love with Pasithæa, who resided with her sister the wife of Vulcan, in Lemnos, it was very probable he might be found haunting near his mistress. Other commentators perceiving the weakness of these conjectures, will have it that Juno met Sleep here by mere accident: but this is contradictory to the whole thread of the narration. But who knows whether Homer might not design this

Sweet pleasing Sleep ! (Saturnia thus began)

Who spread'st thy empire o'er each god and man ;

fiction as a piece of raillery upon the sluggishness of the Lemnians ; though this character of them does not appear ? A kind of satire like that of Ariosto, who makes the angel find Discord in a monastery. Or like that of Boileau in his *Lutrin*, where he places Moleffe in a dormitory of the monks of St. Bernard.

v. 266. *Sweet pleasing Sleep*, etc.] Virgil has copied some part of this conversation between Juno and Sleep, where he introduces the same goddess making a request to Æolus. Scaliger, who is always eager to depreciate Homer, and zealous to praise his favourite author, has highly censured this passage: but notwithstanding this critic's judgment an impartial reader will find, I do not doubt, much more art and beauty in the original than the copy. In the former, Juno endeavours to engage Sleep in her design by the promises of a proper and valuable present ; but having formerly run a great hazard in a like attempt, he is not prevailed upon. Hereupon the goddess, knowing his passion for one of the Graces, engages to give her to his desires : this hope brings the lover to consent, but not before he obliges Juno to confirm her promise by an oath in the most solemn manner, the very words and ceremony whereof he prescribes to her. These are all beautiful and poetical circumstances, most whereof are untouched by Virgil, and which Scaliger therefore calls low and vulgar. He only makes Juno demand a favour from Æolus, which he had no reason to refuse ; and promise him a reward, which it does not appear he was fond of. The Latin poet has indeed, with great judgment, added one circumstance concerning the promise of children.

—et pulchra faciat te prole parentem.

If e'er obsequious to thy Juno's will,  
 O pow'r of slumbers ! hear, and favour still.  
 Shed thy soft dews on Jove's immortal eyes, 270  
 While sunk in love's entrancing joys he lies.  
 A splendid footstool, and a throne, that shine  
 With gold unfading, Somnus, shall be thine ;  
 The work of Vulcan ; to indulge thy ease,  
 When wine and feasts thy golden humours please. 275  
 Imperial dame (the balmy pow'r replies)  
 Great Saturn's heir, and empress of the skies !  
 O'er other gods I spread my easy chain ;  
 The fire of all, old Ocean, owns my reign,  
 And his hush'd waves lie silent on the main. 280

And this is very conformable to the religion of the Romans, among whom Juno was supposed to preside over human birth ; but it does not appear she had any such office in the Greek theology.

v. 272. *A splendid footstool.*] Notwithstanding the cavils of Scaliger, it may be allowed that an easy chair was no improper present for Sleep. As to the footstool, madam Dacier's observation is a very just one ; that besides its being a conveniency, it was a mark of honour and was far from presenting any low or trivial idea. It is upon that account we find it so frequently mentioned in scripture, where the earth is called *the footstool of the throne of God*. In Jeremiah, Judæa is called, as a mark of distinction, *the footstool of the feet of God*, Lam. ii. 1. *And he remembered not the footstool of his feet, in the day of his wrath*. We see here the same image, founded, no doubt, upon the very same customs. Dacier.

v. 279. *The fire of all, old Ocean.*] “Homer, says Plutarch, calls the sea *father of all*, with a view

But how, unbidden, shall I dare to sleep,  
 Jove's awful temples in the dew of sleep?  
 Long since too vent'rous, at thy bold command,  
 On those eternal lids I laid my hand:  
 What time, deserting Ilion's wasted plain,  
 His conqu'ring son, Alcides, plow'd the main:

285

“to this doctrine, that all things were generated from  
 “water. Thales the Milesian, the head of the Ionic  
 “sect, who seems to have been the first author of phi-  
 “losophy, affirmed water to be the principle from  
 “whence all things spring, and into which all things  
 “are resolved; because the prolific seed of all animals  
 “is a moisture; all plants are nourished by moisture;  
 “the very sun and stars, which are fire, are nourished  
 “by moist vapours and exhalations; and consequent-  
 “ly he thought the world was produced from this ele-  
 “ment.” Plut. Opin. of Philos. lib. c. 3.

v. 281. *But how, unbidden, etc.*] This particularity is worth remarking; Sleep tells Juno that he dares not approach Jupiter without his own order; whereby he seems to intimate, that a spirit of a superior kind may give itself up to a voluntary cessation of thought and action, though it does not want this relaxation from any weakness or necessity of its nature.

v. 285. *What time, deserting Ilion's wasted plain, etc.*] One may observe from hence, that to make falsity in fables useful and subservient to our designs, it is not enough to cause the story to resemble truth, but we are to corroborate it by parallel places; which method the poet uses elsewhere. Thus many have attempted great difficulties, and surmounted them. So did Hercules, so did Juno, so did Pluto. Here therefore the poet feigning that Sleep is going to practise insidiously upon Jove, prevents the strangeness and incredibility of the tale, by squaring it to an ancient story; which ancient  
 story

When lo ! the deeps arise, the tempests rore,  
 And drive the hero to the Coan shore:  
 Great Jove awaking, shook the blest abodes  
 With rising wrath, and tumbled gods on gods ; 290  
 Me chief he fought, and from the realms on high  
 Had hurl'd indignant to the nether sky,  
 But gentle Night, to whom I fled for aid,  
 (The friend of earth and heav'n) her wings display'd ;  
 Impower'd the wrath of gods and men to tame, 295  
 Ev'n Jove rever'd the venerable dame.

story was, that sleep had once before got the mastery of Jove in the case of Hercules. Eustathius.

v. 296. *Ev'n Jove rever'd the venerable dame.*] Jupiter is represented as unwilling to do any thing that might be offensive or ungrateful to Night ; the poet, says Eustathius, instructs us by this, that a wise and honest man will curb his wrath before any awful and venerable persons. Such was Night in regard of Jupiter, feigned as an ancestor, and honourable on account of her antiquity and power. For the Greek theology teaches that Night and Chaos were before all things. Wherefore it was held sacred to obey the Night in the conflicts of war, as we find by the admonitions of the heralds to Hector and Ajax in the 7th Iliad.

Milton has made a fine use of this ancient opinion in relation to Chaos and Night, in the latter part of his second book, where he describes the passage of Satan through their empire. He calls them,

——*Eldest Night*

*And Chaos, ancestors of nature ;*

And alludes to the same, in those noble verses,

Vain are thy fears (the queen of heav'n replies,  
And speaking, rolls her large majestic eyes)  
Think'st thou that Troy has Jove's high favour won,  
Like great Alcides, his all-conqu'ring son? 300  
Hear, and obey the mistress of the skies,  
Nor for the deed expect a vulgar prize;  
For know, thy lov'd one shall be ever thine,  
The youngest Grace, Pasithae the divine.

Swear then, he said, by these tremendous floods 305  
That roar through hell, and bind th' invoking gods:  
Let the great parent earth one hand sustain,  
And stretch the other o'er the sacred main.

—————Behold the throne  
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread  
Wide on the wasteful deep: with him enthron'd  
Sate sable-vested night, eldest of things  
The consort of his reign.——

That fine apostrophe of Spencer has also the same allusion, book I.

*O thou, most ancient grandmother of all,  
More old than Jove, whom thou at first didst breed,  
Or that great house of gods celestial;  
Which was begot in Damogorgon's hall,  
And saw'st the secrets of the world unmade.*

v. 307. *Let the great parent earth one hand sustain,  
And stretch the other o'er the sacred main, etc.]*

There is something wonderfully solemn in this manner of swearing proposed by Sleep to Juno. How answerable is this idea to the dignity of the queen of the goddesses, where earth, ocean, and hell itself, where the



Call the black Titans that with Chronos dwell,  
To hear, and witness from the depths of hell;      310  
That she, my lov'd one, shall be ever mine,  
The youngest Grace, Pasithae the divine.

The queen assents, and from th' infernal bow'rs,  
Invokes the fable subtartarean pow'rs,  
And those who rule th' inviolable floods,      315  
Whom mortals name the dread Titanian gods.

Then swift as wind, o'er Lemnos' smoaky isle,  
They wing their way, and Imbrus' sea-beat soil,  
Through air unseen involv'd in darkness glide,  
And light on Lectos, on the point of Ide,      320  
(Mother of savages, whose echoing hills  
Are heard resounding with a hundred rills)  
Fair Ida trembles underneath the god;  
Hush'd are her mountains, and her forests nod.

whole creation, all things visible and invisible, are called to be witnesses of the oath of the deity?

v. 311. *That she, my lov'd one, etc.*] Sleep is here made to repeat the words of Juno's promise, than which repetition nothing, I think, can be more beautiful or better placed. The lover fired with these hopes, insists on the promise, dwelling with pleasure on each circumstance that relates to his fair-one. The throne and footstool, it seems, are quite out of his head.

v. 323. *Fair Ida trembles.*] It is usually supposed at the approach or presence of any heavenly being, that upon their motion all should shake that lies beneath them. Here the poet, giving a description of the descent of these deities upon the ground at Lectos, says, that the loftiest of the wood trembled under their feet:

There on a fir, whose spiry branches rise 325  
 To join its summit to the neighb'ring skies,  
 Dark in embow'ring shade, conceal'd from sight,  
 Sate Sleep, in likeness of the bird of night.

which expression is to intimate the lightness and the swiftness of the motions of heavenly beings; the wood does not shake under their feet from any corporeal weight, but from a certain awful dread and horror. Eustathius.

v. 328.—*In likeness of the bird of night.*] This is a bird about the size of a hawk, entirely black; and that is the reason why Homer describes Sleep under its form. Here, says Eustathius, Homer lets us know, as well as in many other places, that he is no stranger to the language of the gods. Hobbes has taken very much from the dignity of this supposition, in translating the present lines in this manner.

*And there sate Sleep, in likeness of a fowl,  
 Which gods do Chalcis call, and men an owl.*

We find in Plato's Cratylus a discourse of great subtlety, grounded chiefly on this observation of Homer, that the gods and men call the same thing by different names. The philosopher supposes, that in the original language every thing was expressed by a word, whose sound was naturally apt to mark the nature of the thing signified. This great work he ascribes to the gods, since it required more knowledge both in the nature of sounds and things, than man had attained to. This resemblance, he says, was almost lost in modern languages by the unskilful alterations men had made, and the great licence they had taken in compounding of words. However, he observes there were yet among the Greeks some remains of this original language, of which he gives a few instances, adding, that many more were to be found in some of the barbarous languages,

(Chalcis his name by those of heav'nly birth,  
But call'd Cymindis by the race of earth.)      330

To Ida's top successful Juno flies ;  
Great Jove surveys her with desiring eyes :  
The God, whose light'ning sets the heav'ns on fire,  
Through all his bosom feels the fierce desire ;  
Fierce as when first by stealth he seiz'd her charms,      335  
Mix'd with her soul, and melted in her arms.  
Fix'd on her eyes he fed his eager look,  
Then press'd her hand, and thus with transport spoke.

Why comes my goddess from th'ætherial sky,  
And not her steeds and flaming chariot nigh ?      340

Then she——I haste to those remote abodes,  
Where the great parents of the deathless gods,  
The rev'rend Ocean and great Tethys reign,  
On the last limits of the land and main.  
I visit these, to whose indulgent cares      345  
I owe the nursing of my tender years.  
For strife, I hear, has made that union cease,  
Which held so long this ancient pair in peace.

that had deviated less from the original, which was still preserved entire among the gods. This appears a notion so uncommon, that I could not forbear to mention it.

V. 345.——*To whose indulgent cares*

*I owe the nursing, etc.]*

The allegory of this is very obvious. Juno is constantly understood to be the air : and we are here told she was nourished by the vapours which rise from the Ocean and the Earth. For Tethys is the same with Rhea. Eustathius,

The steeds, prepar'd my chariot to convey  
 O'er earth and seas, and through th' aerial way, 350  
 Wait under Ide : Of thy superior pow'r  
 To ask consent, I leave th' Olympian bow'r ;  
 Nor seek, unknown to thee, the sacred cells  
 Deep under seas, where hoary Ocean dwells.

For that, said Jove, suffice another day ; 355  
 But eager love denies the least delay.  
 Let softer cares the present hour employ,  
 And be these moments sacred all to joy.  
 Ne'er did my soul so strong a passion prove,  
 Or for an earthly, or a heav'nly love : 360  
 Not when I press'd Ixion's matchless dame,  
 Whence rose Perithous like the gods in fame.  
 Not when fair Danae felt the show'r of gold  
 Stream into life, whence Perseus brave and bold.

v. 359.] This courtship of Jupiter to Juno may possibly be thought pretty singular. He endeavours to prove the ardour of his passion to her, by the instances of its warmth to other women. A great many people will look upon this as no very likely method to recommend himself to Juno's favour. Yet, after all, something may be said in defence of Jupiter's way of thinking with respect to the ladies. Perhaps a man's love to the sex in general may be no ill recommendation of him to a particular. And to be known or thought to have been successful with a good many, is what some moderns have found no unfortunate qualification in gaining a lady, even a most virtuous one like Juno, especially one who, like her, has had the experience of a married state.

Not thus I burn'd for either Theban dame,     365

(Bacchus from this, from that Alcides came.)

Not Phoenix' daughter, beautiful and young,

Whence godlike Rhadamanth and Minos sprung.

Not thus I burn'd for fair Latona's face,

Nor comelier Ceres' more majestic grace.     370

Not thus ev'n for thyself I felt desire,

As now my veins receive the pleasing fire.

He spoke ; the goddess with the charming eyes

Glow with celestial red and thus replies.

Is this a scene for love ? On Ida's height     375

Expos'd to mortal, and immortal sight ;

Our joys prophan'd by each familiar eye ;

The sport of heav'n, and fable of the sky.

How shall I e'er review the blest abodes,

Or mix among the senate of the gods ?     380

Shall I not think, that, with disorder'd charms,

All heav'n beholds me rescent from thy arms ?

With skill divine has Vulcan form'd thy bow'r,

Sacred to love, and to the genial hour ;

If such thy will, to that recess retire,     385

And secret there indulge thy soft desire.

She ceas'd ; and smiling with superior love,

Thus answer'd mild the cloud-compelling Jove.

Nor God, nor mortal shall our joys behold,

Shaded with clouds, and circumfus'd in gold,     390

Not ev'n the sun, who darts through heav'n his rays,

And whose broad eye th'extended earth surveys.

Gazing he spoke, and kindling at the view,  
His eager arms around the goddess threw.  
Glad earth perceives, and from her bosom pours 395  
Unbidden herbs and voluntary flow'rs :

v. 395. *Glad earth perceives*, etc.] It is an observation of Aristotle, in the 25th chapter of his Poetics, that when Homer is obliged to describe any thing of itself absurd, or too improbable, he constantly contrives to blind and dazzle the judgment of his readers with some shining description. This passage is a remarkable instance of that artifice; for having imagined a fiction of very great absurdity, that the supreme being should be laid asleep in a female embrace, he immediately, as it were, to divert his reader from reflecting on his boldness, pours forth a great variety of poetical ornaments; by describing the various flowers the earth shoots up to compose their couch, the golden clouds that encompassed them, and the bright heavenly dews that were showered round them. Eustathius observes it as an instance of Homer's modest conduct in so delicate an affair, that he has purposely adorned the bed of Jupiter with such a variety of beautiful flowers, that the reader's thoughts being entirely taken up with these ornaments, might have no room for loose imaginations. In the same manner an ancient scholiast has observed, that the golden cloud was contrived to lock up this action from any farther inquiry of the reader.

I cannot conclude the notes on this story of Jupiter and Juno, without observing with what particular care Milton has imitated the several beautiful parts of this episode, introducing them upon different occasions as the subjects of his poem would admit. The circumstance of sleep's sitting in likeness of a bird on the fir-tree upon mount Ida, is alluded to in his 4th book, where Satan sits in likeness of a cormorant on the tree of life. The creation is made to give the same tokens of joy at



Thick new-born v'lets a soft carpet spread,  
And clust'ring Lotos swell'd the rising bed,

the performance of the nuptial rites of our first parents,  
as she does here at the congress of Jupiter and Juno. l. 8.

——— *To the nuptial bow'r*

*I led her blushing like the morn, all heav'n*

*And happy constellations on that hour*

*Shed their selectest influence ; the earth*

*Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill ;*

*Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs*

*Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings*

*Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub.*

Those lines also in the 4th book are manifestly from the  
same original.

——— *Roses and jessamine*

*Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and*

*Mosaic, underfoot the violet, [wrought*

*Crocus and hyacinth with rich inlay*

*Broider'd the ground.———*

Where the very turn of Homer's verses is observed, and  
the cadence, and almost the words, finely translated.

But it is with wonderful judgment and decency he has  
used that exceptionable passage of the dalliance, ardour,  
and enjoyment: that which seems in Homer an impious  
fiction, becomes a moral lesson in Milton ; since he makes  
that lascivious rage of the passion the immediate effect of  
the sin of our first parents after the fall. Adam expres-  
ses it in the words of Jupiter.

*For never did thy beauty since the day*

*I saw thee first, and wedded thee, adorn'd*

*With all perfections, so enflame my sense,*

And sudden Hyacinths the turf bestrow,  
 And flamy Crocus made the mountain glow. 400  
 There golden clouds conceal the heav'nly pair,  
 Steep'd in soft joys, and circumfus'd with air;  
 Celestial dews, descending o'er the ground,  
 Perfume the mount, and breathe Ambrosia round.  
 At length with love and sleep's soft pow'r oppress'd, 405  
 The panting thund'rer nods, and sinks to rest.

Now to the navy born on silent wings,  
 To Neptune's ear soft Sleep his message brings;  
 Beside him sudden, unperceiv'd he stood,  
 And thus with gentle words address'd the god. 410

Now, Neptune! now, th'important hour employ,  
 To check a while the haughty hopes of Troy:

*With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now*

*Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!*

*So said he, and forbore not glance or toy  
 Of amorous intent, well understood*

*Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.*

*Her hand he seiz'd, and to a shady bank*

*Thick over-head with verdant roof embower'd,*

*He led her, nothing lothe: flow'rs were the couch,*

*Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,*

*And hyacinth; earth's freshest, softest lap.*

*There they their fill of love and love's disport*

*Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal;*

*The solace of their sin: till dewy Sleep*

*Oppress'd them, weary of their amorous play.*

While Jove yet rests, while yet my vapours shed  
The golden vision round his sacred head;  
For Juno's love, and Somnus' pleasing ties,      415  
Have clos'd those awful and eternal eyes,

Thus having said the pow'r of slumber flew,  
On human lids to drop the balmy dew.  
Neptune, with zeal increas'd, renews his care,  
And tow'ring in the foremost ranks of war,      420  
Indignant thus——Oh once of martial fame!  
O Greeks! if yet ye can deserve the name!  
This half-recover'd day shall Troy obtain?  
Shall Hector thunder at your ships again?  
Lo still he vaunts, and threatens the fleet with fires,      425  
While stern Achilles in his wrath retires.

v. 417. *The pow'r of slumber flew.*] M. Dacier, in her translation of this passage has thought fit to dissent from the common interpretation, as well as obvious sense of the words. She restrains the general expression *ἐπὶ κλυτὰ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων*, *the famous nations of men*, to signify only the country of the Lemnians, who, she says, were much celebrated on account of Vulcan. But this strained interpretation cannot be admitted, especially when the obvious meaning of the words express what is very proper and natural. The god of Sleep having hastily delivered his message to Neptune, immediately leaves the hurry of the battle, (which was no proper scene for him) and retires among the tribes of mankind. The word *κλυτὰ*, on which M. Dacier grounds her criticism, is an expletive epithet very common in Homer, and no way fit to point out one certain nation, especially in an author, one of whose most distinguishing characters is particularity in description.

One hero's loss too tamely you deplore,  
 Be still yourselves, and we shall need no more.  
 Oh yet, if glory any bosom warms,  
 Brace on your firmest helms, and stand to arms: 430  
 His strongest spear each valiant Grecian wield,  
 Each valiant Grecian seize his broadest shield;  
 Let, to the weak, the lighter arms belong,  
 The pond'rous target be wielded by the strong.  
 (Thus arm'd) not Hector shall our presence stay; 435  
 Myself, ye Greeks! myself will lead the way.

The troops assent; their martial arms they change,  
 The busy chiefs their banded legions range.  
 The kings, though wounded, and oppress'd with pain,  
 With helpful hands themselves assist the train. 440  
 The strong and cumb'rous arms the valiant wield,  
 The weaker warrior takes a lighter shield.

v. 442. *The weaker warrior takes a lighter shield.*]  
 Plutarch seems to allude to this passage in the beginning  
 of the life of Pelopidas. "Homer, says he, makes  
 " the bravest and stoutest of his warriors march to bat-  
 " tle in the best arms. The Grecian legislators punished  
 " those who cast away their shields, but not those who  
 " lost their spears or their swords; as an intimation  
 " that the care of preserving and defending ourselves is  
 " preferable to the wounding our enemy, especially in  
 " those who are generals of armies, or governors of  
 " states." Eustathius has observed, that the poet here  
 makes the best warriors take the largest shields and long-  
 est spears, that they might be ready prepared, with pro-  
 per arms, both offensive and defensive, for a new kind  
 of fight, in which they are soon to be engaged when the  
 fleet is attacked. Which indeed seems the most ratio-  
 nal

Thus sheath'd in shining brass in bright array,  
 The legions march, and Neptune leads the way:  
 His brandish'd faulchion flames before their eyes, 445  
 Like light'ning flashing through the frighted skies.  
 Clad in his might th' earth-shaking pow'r appears;  
 Pale mortals tremble, and confess their fears.  
 Troy's great defender stands alone unaw'd,  
 Arms his proud host, and dares oppose a god : 450

nal account that can be given for Neptune's advice in this exigence.

Mr. Hobbes has committed a great oversight in this place; he makes the wounded princes (who it is plain were unfit for the battle, and do not engage in the ensuing fight) put on arms as well as the others; whereas they do no more in Homer than see their orders obeyed by the rest, as to this change of arms.

v. 444. *The legions march, and Neptune leads the way.*] The chief advantage the Greeks gain by the sleep of Jupiter, seems to be this: Neptune unwilling to offend Jupiter has hitherto concealed himself in disguised shapes; so that it does not appear that Jupiter knew of his being among the Greeks, since he has taken no notice of it. This precaution hinders him from assisting the Greeks otherwise than by his advice. But upon the intelligence received of what Juno had done, he assumes a form that manifests his divinity, inspiring courage into the Grecian chiefs, appearing at the head of their army, brandishing a sword in his hand, the sight of which struck such a terror into the Trojans, that, as Homer says, none durst approach it. And therefore it is not to be wondered, that the Trojans, who are no longer sustained by Jupiter, immediately give way to the enemy.

And lo! the god, and wond'rous man appear :  
 The sea's stern ruler there, and Hector here.  
 The roaring main, at her great master's call,  
 Rose in huge ranks, and form'd a watry wall  
 Around the ships : seas hanging o'er the shores, 455  
 Both armies join : earth thunders, ocean roars.  
 Not half so loud the bellowing deeps resound,  
 When stormy winds disclose the dark profound ;

v. 451. *And lo! the god, and wond'rous man appear.*] What magnificence and nobleness is there in this idea ! where Homer opposes Hector to Neptune, and equalizes him, in some degree, to a god. Eustathius.

v. 453. *The roaring main, etc.*] This swelling and inundation of the sea towards the Grecian camp, as if it had been agitated by a storm, is meant for a prodigy, intimating, that the waters had the same resentments with their commander Neptune, and seconded him in his quarrel. Eustathius.

v. 457. *Not half so loud, etc.*] The poet having ended the episode of Jupiter and Juno, returns to the battle, where the Greeks, being animated and led on by Neptune, renew the fight with vigour. The noise and outcry of this fresh onset, he endeavours to express by these three sounding comparisons ; as if he thought it necessary to awake the reader's attention, which by the preceding descriptions might be lulled into a forgetfulness of the fight. He might likewise design to shew how soundly Jupiter slept, since he is not awaked by so terrible an uproar.

This passage cannot be thought justly liable to the objections which have been made against heaping comparisons one upon another, whereby the principal object is lost amidst too great a variety of different images. In this case the principal image is more strongly impres-



Less loud the winds, that from th' Æolian hall  
 Roar through the woods, and make whole forests fall;  
 Less loud the woods, when flames in torrents pour,  
 Catch the dry-mountain, and its shades devour.  
 With such a rage the meeting hosts are driv'n,  
 And such a clamour shakes the sounding heav'n.  
 The first bold jav'lin urg'd by Hector's force, 465  
 Direct at Ajax' bosom-wing'd its course;

fed on the mind by a multiplication of similes, which are the natural product of an imagination labouring to express something very fast: but finding no single idea sufficient to answer its conceptions, it endeavours by redoubling the comparisons to supply this defect: the different sounds of waters, winds, and flames, being as it were united in one. We have several instances of this sort even in so castigated and reserved a writer as Virgil, who has joined together the images of this passage in the fourth Georgic, v. 261. and applied them, beautifully softened by a kind of parody, to the buzzing of a bee-hive.

*Frigidus ut quondam sylvis immurmurat Ausser,  
 Ut mare sollicitum fridet refluentibus undis,  
 Æstuat ut clausis rapidus fornacibus ignis.*

Tasso has not only imitated this particular passage of Homer, but likewise added to it. Cant. 9. St. 22.

*Rapido sì che torbida procella  
 De cavernosi monti esce piu tarda:  
 Fiume, ch' alberi insieme, e case scella.  
 Folgore, che le torri abbatta, et arda:  
 Terremoto, che 'l mondo empia d' horrore,  
 Son picciole sembianze al suo furore.*

But there no pass the crossing belts afford,  
 (One brac'd his shield, and one sustain'd his sword)  
 'Then back the disappointed Trojan drew,  
 And curs'd the lance that unavailing flew : 470  
 But 'scap'd not Ajax ; his tempestuous hand  
 A pond'rous stone up-heaving from the sand,  
 (Where heaps lay'd loose beneath the warrior's feet,  
 Or serv'd to ballast, or to prop the fleet)  
 Toss'd round and round, the missive marble flings ;  
 On the raz'd shield the falling ruin rings, 576  
 Full on his breast and throat with force descends ;  
 Nor deaden'd there its giddy fury spends,  
 But whirling on, with many a fiery round,  
 Smokes in the dust, and ploughs into the ground. 480

v. 480. *Smokes in the dust, and ploughs into the ground.*]

Στερόμενον δ' ὡς ἔσπευε βαλὼν, etc.

These words are translated by several, as if they signified that Hector was turned round with the blow, like a whirlwind ; which would enhance the wonderful greatness of Ajax's strength. Eustathius rather inclines to refer the words to the stone itself, and the violence of its motion. Chapman, I think, is in the right to prefer the latter, but he should not have taken the interpretation to himself. He says, it is above the wit of man to give a more fiery illustration both of Ajax's strength and Hector's ; of Ajax, for giving such a force to the stone, that it could not spend itself on Hector ; but afterwards turned upon the earth with that violence ; and of Hector, for standing the blow so solidly : for without that consideration, the stone could never have recoiled so fiercely. This image, together with the

As when the bolt, red-hissing from above,  
 Darts on the consecrated plant of Jove,  
 The mountain oak in flaming ruin lies,  
 Black from the blow, and smokes of sulphur rise;  
 Stiff with amaze the pale beholders stand, 485  
 And own the terrors of th' almighty hand !  
 So lies great Hector prostrate on the shore ;  
 His slacken'd hand deserts the lance it bore ;  
 His following shield the fallen chief o'erspread ;  
 Beneath his helmet dropp'd his fainting head ; 490  
 His load of armour sinking to the ground,  
 Clanks on the field ; a dead, and hollow sound.  
 Loud shouts of triumph fill the crouded plain ;  
 Greece fees, in hope, Troy's great defender slain :  
 All spring to seize him ; storms of arrows fly ; 495  
 And thicker jav'lines intercept the sky.

noble simile following it, seem to have given Spenser the  
 hint of those sublime verses.

*As when almighty Jove, in wrathful mood,  
 To wreak the guilt of mortal sins is bent,  
 Hurls forth his thund'ring dart, with deadly food.  
 Enroll'd, of flames, and smould'ring dreariment :  
 Through riven clouds, and molten firmament,  
 The fierce three-forked engine making way,  
 Both lofty tow'rs and highest trees bath rent,  
 And all that might his dreadful passage stay,  
 And shooting in the earth, casts up a mould of clay.  
 His boist'rous club so bury'd in the ground,  
 He could not rear again, etc.*

In vain an iron tempest hisses round ;  
He lies protected, and without a wound.  
Polydamas, Agenor the divine,  
The pious warrior of Anchises' line. 500  
And each bold leader of the Lycian band ;  
With cov'ring shields (a friendly circle) stand.  
His mournful followers, with assistant care,  
The groaning hero to his chariot bear ;  
His foaming courfers, swifter than the wind, 505  
Speed to the town, and leave the war behind.

When now they touch'd the mead's enamel'd side,  
Where gentle Xanthus rolls his easy tide,  
With watry drops the chief they sprinkle round,  
Plac'd on the margin of the flow'ry ground. 510  
Rais'd on his knees he now ejects the gore ;  
Now faints a-new, low-sinking on the shore ;  
By fits he breathes, half-views the fleeting skies,  
And seals again, by fits, his swimming eyes.

Soon as the Greeks the chief's retreat beheld, 515  
With double fury each invades the field.  
Oilean Ajax first his jav'lin sped,  
Pierc'd by whose point the son of Enops bled ;  
(Satnius the brave, whom beauteous Neis bore  
Amidst her flocks on Satnio's silver shore) 520  
Struck through the belly's rim, the warrior lies  
Supine, and shades eternal veil his eyes.  
An arduous battle rose around the dead ;  
By turns the Greeks ; by turns the Trojans bled.

Fir'd with revenge, Polydamas drew near, 525  
 And at Prothœnor shook the trembling spear;  
 The driving jav'lin through his shoulder thrust,  
 He sinks to earth, and grasps the bloody dust.  
 Lo thus, the victor cries, we rule the field,  
 And thus their arms the race of Panthus wield: 530  
 From this unerring hand there flies no dart  
 But bathes its point within a Grecian heart.  
 Propt on that spear to which thou ow'st thy fall,  
 Go, guide thy darksome steps to Pluto's dreary hall!  
 He said, and sorrow touch'd each Argive breast: 535  
 The soul of Ajax burn'd above the rest.  
 As by his side the groaning warrior fell,  
 At the fierce foe he launch'd his piercing steel;  
 The foe reclining, shunn'd the flying death:  
 But fate, Archelochus, demands thy breath: 540  
 Thy lofty birth no succour could impart,  
 The wings of death o'ertook thee on the dart,  
 Swift to perform heav'n's fatal will it fled,  
 Full on the juncture of the neck and head,

v. 533. *Propt on that spear, etc.*] The occasion of this farcasm of Polydamas seems taken from the attitude of his falling enemy, who is transfix'd with a spear thro' his right shoulder. This posture bearing some resemblance to that of a man leaning on a staff, might probably suggest the conceit.

The speech of Polydamas begins a long string of farcastic raillery, in which Eustathius pretends to observe very different characters. This of Polydamas, he says, is pleasant; that of Ajax, heroic; that of Acamas, plain; and that of Peneleus, pathetic,

And took the joint, and cut the nerves in twain: 545

The dropping head first tumbled to the plain.

So just the stroke, that yet the body stood

Erect, then roll'd along the sands in blood.

Here, proud Polydamas, here turn thy eyes!

(The tow'ring Ajax loud insulting cries): 550

Say, is this chief extended on the plain,

A worthy vengeance for Prothœnor slain?

Mark well his port! his figure and his face:

Nor speak him vulgar, nor of vulgar race;

Some lines, methinks, may make his lineage known,

Antenor's brother, or perhaps his son. 556

He spake, and smil'd severe, for well he knew

The bleeding youth: Troy fadden'd at the view.

But furious Acamas aveng'd his cause;

As Promachus his slaughter'd brother draws, 560

He pierc'd his heart——Such fate attends you all,

Proud Argives! destin'd by our arms to fall.

Not Troy alone, but haughty Greece shall share

The toils, the sorrows, and the wounds of war.

Behold your Promachus depriv'd of breath, 565

A victim ow'd to my brave brother's death.

Not unappeas'd he enters Pluto's gate,

Who leaves a brother to revenge his fate.

Heart-piercing anguish struck the Grecian host,

But touch'd the breast of bold Peneleus most; 570

At the proud boaster he directs his course;

The boaster flies, and shuns superior force.



But young Ilioneus receiv'd the spear ;

Ilioneus, his father's only care :

(Phorbas the rich, of all the Trojan train 575

Whom Hermes lov'd, and taught the arts of gain)

Full in his eye the weapon chanc'd to fall,

And from the fibres scoop'd the rooted ball,

Drove through the neck, and hurl'd him to the plain :

He lifts his miserable arms in vain ! 580

Swift his broad faulchion fierce Peneleus spread,

And from the spouting shoulders struck his head ;

To earth at once the head and helmet fly ;

The lance, yet sticking through the bleeding eye,

The victor seiz'd ; and as aloft he shook 585

The goary visage, thus insulting spoke.

Trojans ! your great Ilioneus behold !

Haste, to his father let the tale be told :

Let his high roofs resound with frantic woe,

Such, as the house of Promachus must know ; 590

Let doleful tidings greet his mother's ear,

Such, as to Promachus' sad spouse we bear ;

When we victorious shall to Greece return,

And the pale matron in our triumphs mourn. 594

Dreadful he spoke, then toss'd the head on high ;

The Trojans hear they tremble, and they fly :

Aghast they gaze around the fleet and wall,

And dread the ruin that impends on all.

Daughters of Jove ! that on Olympus shine,  
 Ye all-beholding, all-recording nine ! 600  
 O say, when Neptune made proud Ilion yield,  
 What chief, what hero first embro'd the field ?  
 Of all the Grecians what immortal name,  
 And whose blest trophies, will ye raise to fame ?

v. 599. *Daughters of Jove !* etc.] Whenever we meet with these fresh invocations in the midst of action, the poets would seem to give their readers to understand, that they are come to a point, where the description being above their own strength, they have occasion for supernatural assistance ; by this artifice at once exciting the reader's attention, and gracefully varying the narration. In the present case, Homer seems to triumph in the advantage the Greeks had gained in the flight of the Trojans, by invoking the muses to snatch the brave actions of his heroes from oblivion, and set them in the light of eternity. This power is vindicated to them by the poets on every occasion, and it is to this task they are so solemnly and frequently summoned by our author. Tasso has, I think, introduced one of these invocations in a very noble and peculiar manner ; where, on occasion of a battle by night, he calls upon the Night to allow him to draw forth those mighty deeds, which were performed under the concealment of her shades, and to display their glories, notwithstanding that disadvantage, to all posterity.

*Notte, che nel profondo oscuro seno  
 Chiudesti, e ne l' oblio fatto sì grande ;  
 Piacciati, ch' io nel tragga, e'n bel sereno  
 A la future età lo spieghi, e mande.  
 Viva la fame loro, e tra lor gloria  
 Splenda del fosco tuo l' alta memoria.*

Thou first, great Ajax ! on th' ensanguin'd plain  
Laid Hyrtius, leader of the Mysian train.      606  
Phalces and Mermer, Nestor's son o'erthrew ;  
Bold Merion, Morys, and Hippotion flew.  
Strong Periphætēs and Prothoon bled,  
By Teucer's arrows mingled with the dead.      610  
Pierc'd in the flank by Menelaus steel  
His people's pastor, Hyperenor fell ;  
Eternal darknets wrapt the warrior round,  
And the fierce soul came rushing through the wound.  
But stretch'd in heaps before Oileus' son,      615  
Fall mighty numbers, mighty numbers run ;  
Ajax the less, of all the Grecian race  
Skill'd in pursuit, and swiftest in the chace.



## I L I A D.

## B O O K X V.

## T H E A R G U M E N T.

The fifth battle, at the ships ; and the acts of Ajax.

*JUPITER* awaking, sees the Trojans repulsed from the trenches, *Hector* in a swoon, and *Neptune* at the head of the Greeks : he is highly incensed at the artifice of *Juno*, who appeases him by her submissions ; she is then sent to *Iris* and *Apollo*. *Juno* repairing to the assembly of the gods, attempts with extraordinary address to incense them against *Jupiter* ; in particular she touches *Mars* with a violent resentment : he is ready to take arms, but is prevented by *Minerva*. *Iris* and *Apollo* obey the orders of *Jupiter* ; *Iris* commands *Neptune* to leave the battle, to which, after much reluctance and passion, he consents. *Apollo* re-inspires *Hector* with vigour, brings him back to the battle, marches before him with his *Ægis*, and turns the fortune of the fight. He breaks down great part of the Grecian wall : the Trojans rush in, and attempt to fire the first line of the fleet, but are, as yet, repelled by the greater *Ajax* with a prodigious slaughter.

**N**OW in swift flight they pass the trench profound,  
And many a chief lay gasping on the ground :  
Then stopp'd and panted, where the chariots lie ;  
Fear on their cheek, and horror in their eye.

Meanwhile awaken'd from his dream of love, 5  
 On Ida's summit sat imperial Jove :  
 Round the wide fields he cast a careful view,  
 There saw the Trojans fly, the Greeks pursue ;  
 These proud in arms, those scatter'd o'er the plain ;  
 And, 'midst the war, the monarch of the main. 10  
 Not far, great Hector on the dust he spies,  
 (His sad associates round with weeping eyes)  
 Ejecting blood, and panting yet for breath,  
 His senses wand'ring to the verge of death.  
 The god beheld him with a pitying look, 15  
 And thus, incens'd, to fraudulent Juno spoke.

O thou, still adverse to th' eternal will,  
 For ever studious in promoting ill !  
 Thy arts have made the godlike Hector yield,  
 And driv'n his conqu'ring squadrons from the field. 20  
 Can'st thou, unhappy in thy wiles ! withstand  
 Our pow'r immense, and brave th' almighty hand ?  
 Hast thou forgot, when bound and fix'd on high,  
 From the vast concave of the spangled sky,

v. 17.] Adam, in Paradise Lost, awakes from the embrace of Eve, in much the same humour with Jupiter in this place. Their circumstance is very parallel; and each of them, as soon as his passion is over, full of that resentment natural to a superior, who is imposed upon by one of less worth and sense than himself, and imposed upon in the worst manner, by shews of tenderness and love.

v. 23. *Hast thou forgot, etc.*] It is in the original to this effect. *Have you forgot how you swung in the*



I hung thee trembling, in a golden chain; 25  
 And all the raging gods oppos'd in vain?  
 Headlong I hurl'd them from th'Olympian hall,  
 Stunn'd in the whirl, and breathless with the fall.

*air, when I hung a load of two anvils at your feet, and a chain of gold on your hands?* “ Though it is not  
 “ my design, says M. Dacier, to give a reason for every  
 “ story in the Pagan theology, yet I cannot prevail  
 “ upon myself to pass over this in silence. The physical  
 “ allegory seems very apparent to me: Homer  
 “ mysteriously in this place explains the nature of the  
 “ air, which is Juno: the two anvils which she had at  
 “ her feet are the two elements, earth and water; and  
 “ the chains of gold about her hands are the æther, or  
 “ fire which fills the superior region: the two grosser  
 “ elements are called anvils, to shew us, that in these  
 “ two elements only, arts are exercised. I do not  
 “ know but that a moral allegory may here be found,  
 “ as well as a physical one; the poet, by these masses  
 “ tied to the feet of Juno, and by the chain of gold  
 “ with which her hands were bound, might signify, not  
 “ only that domestic affairs should like fetters detain  
 “ the wife at home: but that proper and beautiful works,  
 “ like chains of gold, ought to employ her hands.”

The physical part of this note belongs to Heraclides Ponticus, Eustathius, and the scholiast: M. Dacier might have been contented with the credit of the moral one, as it seems an observation no less singular in a lady.

v. 23.] Eustathius tells us, that there were in some manuscripts of Homer two verses, which are not to be found in any of the printed editions, (which Hen. Stephens places here.)

For godlike Hercules these deeds were done,  
 Nor seem'd the vengeance worthy such a son ; 30  
 When by thy wiles induc'd, fierce Boreas tost  
 The shipwreck'd hero on the Coan coast :  
 Him through a thousand forms of death I bore,  
 And sent to Argos, and his native shore.  
 Hear this, remember, and our fury dread, 35  
 Nor pull th' unwilling vengeance on thy head ;  
 Lest arts and blandishments successless prove,  
 Thy soft deceits, and well-dissembled love.

The thund'rer spoke : imperial Juno mourn'd,  
 And trembling, these submissive words return'd. 40

By ev'ry oath that pow'rs immortal ties,  
 The foodful earth, and all-infolding skies,  
 By thy black waves, tremendous Styx ! that flow  
 Through the drear realms of gliding ghosts below :

Πρὶν γ' ὅτε δὴ σ' ἀπέλασα ποδῶν, μύδρες δ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ  
 Καβέσων ὄφρα πέλοιτο καὶ ἑσόμενοισι πυθέσθαι.

By these two verses, Homer shews us, that what he says of the punishment of Juno was not an invention of his own, but founded upon an ancient tradition. There had probably been some statue of Juno with anvils at her feet, and chains on her hands ; and nothing but chains and anvils being left by time, superstitious people raised this story ; so that Homer only followed common report. What farther confirms it, is what Eustathius adds, that there were shewn near Troy certain ruins, which were said to be the remains of these masses. Dacier.

v. 43. *By thy black waves, tremendous Styx.*] The epithet Homer here gives to Styx is καταιερόμενον, *sub-*

By the dread honours of thy sacred head,

45

And that unbroken vow, our virgin bed!

Not by my arts the ruler of the main

Steeps Troy in blood, and ranges round the plain:

*terlabens*, which I take to refer to its passage through the infernal regions. But there is a refinement upon it, as if it signified *ex alto stillans*, falling drop by drop from on high. Herodotus, in his sixth book, writes thus. "The Arcadians say, that near the city Nonacris flows the water of Styx, and that it is a small rill, which distilling from an exceeding high rock, falls into a little cavity or basin, environed with a hedge." Pausanias, who had seen the place, gives light to this passage of Herodotus. "Going from Phereus, says he, in the country of the Arcadians, and drawing towards the west, we find, on the left, the city of Clytorus, and on the right that of Nonacris, and the fountain of Styx, which, from the height of a shaggy precipice falls drop by drop upon an exceeding high rock and before it has traversed this rock, flows into the river Crathis: this water is mortal both to man and beast, and therefore it is said to be an infernal fountain. Homer gives it a place in his poems, and by the description which he delivers, one would think he had seen it." This shews the wonderful exactness of Homer, in the description of places which he mentions. The gods swore by Styx, and this was the strongest oath they could take; but we likewise find that men too swore by this fatal water: for Herodotus tells us, Cleomenes going to Arcadia to engage the Arcadians to follow him in a war against Sparta, had a design to assemble at the city Nonacris, and make them swear by the water of this fountain. Dacier. Eustath. in Odyss.

v. 47. *Not by my arts, etc.*] This apology is well

By his own ardour, his own pity sway'd  
 To help his Greeks; he fought, and disobey'd : 50  
 Else had thy Juno better counsels giv'n,  
 And taught submission to the fire of heav'n.

Think'st thou with me? fair empress of the skies!  
 (Th'immortal father with a smile replies!)

Then soon the haughty sea god shall obey, 55  
 Nor dare to act, but when we point the way.  
 If truth inspires thy tongue, proclaim our will  
 To yon' bright synod on th' Olympian hill;  
 Our high decree let various Iris know,  
 And call the god that bears the silver bow. 60  
 Let her descend, and from th'embattel'd plain  
 Command the sea god to his wat'ry reign:  
 While Phœbus haltes, great Hector to prepare  
 To rise afresh, and once more wake the war,  
 His lab'ring bosom re-inspires with breath, 65  
 And calls his senses from the verge of death.  
 Greece chas'd by Troy ev'n to Achilles' fleet,  
 Shall fall by thousands at the hero's feet.

contrived; Juno could not swear that she had not deceived Jnpiter, for this had been entirely false, and Homer would be far from authorizing perjury by so great an example. Juno, we see, throws part of the fault on Neptune, by shewing she had not acted in concert with him. Eustathius.

v. 67. *Greece chas'd by Troy, etc.*] In this discourse of Jupiter, the poet opens his design, by giving his reader a sketch of the principal events he is to expect. As this conduct of Homer may to many appear no way

He, not untouch'd with pity, to the plain  
Shall fend Patroclus, but shall fend in vain.

70

artful, and since it is a principal article of the charge brought against him by some late French critics, it will not be improper here to look a little into this dispute. The case will be best stated by translating the following passage from Mr. de la Motte's *Reflections sur la Critique*.

“ I could not forbear wishing that Homer had an art, which he seems to have neglected, that of preparing events without making them known beforehand; so that when they happen, one might be surprized agreeably. I could not be quite satisfied to hear Jupiter, in the middle of the *Iliad*, give an exact abridgement of the remainder of the action. Madam Dacier alleges as an excuse, that this pass only between Jupiter and Juno; as if the reader was not let into the secret, and had not as much share in the confidence.

She adds, “ that as we are capable of a great deal of pleasure at the representation of a tragedy which we have seen before, so the surprizes which I require are no way necessary to our entertainment. This I think a pure piece of sophistry: one may have two sorts of pleasure at the representation of a tragedy; in the first place, that of taking part in an action of importance the first time it passes before our eyes, of being agitated by fear and hope for the persons one is most concerned about, and, in fine, of partaking their felicity or misfortune, as they happen to succeed, or be disappointed.

“ This therefore is the first pleasure which the poet should design to give his auditors, to transport them by pathetic surprizes which excite terror or pity. The second pleasure must proceed from a view of that art which the author has shewn in raising the former.

“ It is true, when we have seen a piece already, we



What youth he slaughters under Ilion's walls ?

Ev'n my lov'd son, divine Sarpedon falls !

“ have no longer that first pleasure of the surprize, at  
 “ least not in all its vivacity ; but there still remains the  
 “ second, which could never have its turn, had not the  
 “ poet laboured successfully to excite the first, it being  
 “ upon that indispensable obligation that we judge of his art.

“ The art therefore consists in telling the hearer only  
 “ what is necessary to be told him, and in telling him only  
 “ as much as is requisite to the design of pleasing him. And  
 “ although we know this already, when we read it a se-  
 “ cond time, we yet taste the pleasure of that order and  
 “ conduct which the art required.

“ From hence it follows that every poem ought to be  
 “ contrived for the first impression it is to make. If it be  
 “ otherwise, it gives us (instead of two pleasures which  
 “ we expected) two sorts of disgusts ; the one, that of  
 “ being cool and untouched when we should be moved  
 “ and transported ; the other, that of perceiving the  
 “ defect which caused that disgust.

“ This, in one word, is what I have found in the  
 “ Iliad. I was not interested or touched by the adven-  
 “ tures, and I saw it was this cooling preparation that  
 “ prevented my being so.

It appears clearly that M. Dacier's defence no way  
 excuses the poet's conduct ; wherefore I shall add two  
 or three considerations which may chance to set it in a  
 better light. It must be owned, that a surprize artfully  
 managed, which arises from unexpected revolutions of  
 great actions, is extremely pleasing. In this consists  
 the principal pleasure of a romance, or well-writ trage-  
 dy. But besides this, there is in the relation of great  
 events a different kind of pleasure, which arise from the  
 artful-unravelling a knot of actions, which we knew be-  
 fore in the gross. This is a delight peculiar to history



Vanquish'd at last by Hector's lance he lies.  
 Then, nor till then, shall great Achilles rise :  
 And lo ! that instant, godlike Hector dies.

and epic poetry, which is founded on history. In these kinds of writing, a preceding summary knowledge of the events described does no way damp our curiosity, but rather makes it more eager for the detail. This is evident in a good history, where generally the reader is affected with a greater delight in proportion to his preceding knowledge of the facts described : the pleasure in this case is like that of an architect's first view of some magnificent building, who was before well acquainted with the proportions of it. In an epic poem the case is of a like nature ; where, as if the historical foreknowledge were not sufficient, the most judicious poets never fail to excite the reader's curiosity by some small sketches of their design ; which, like the out-lines of a fine picture, will necessarily raise in us a greater desire to see it in its finished colouring.

Had our author been inclined to follow the method of managing our passions by surprizes, he could not well have succeeded by this manner in the subject he chose to write upon, which being a story of great importance, the principal events of which were well known to the Greeks, it was not possible for him to alter the ground-work of his piece ; and probably he was willing to mark sometimes by anticipation, sometimes by recapitulations, how much of his story was founded on historical truths, and that what is superadded were the poetical ornaments.

There is another consideration worth remembering on this head, to justify our author's conduct. It seems to have been an opinion in those early times, deeply rooted in most countries and religions, that the actions, of men were not only foreknown, but predestinated by a superior being. This sentiment is very frequent in

From that great hour the war's whole fortune turns, 76  
Pallas assists; and lofty Ilion burns.

Not till that day shall Jove relax his rage,

Nor one of all the heav'nly host engage

In aid of Greece. The promise of a god 80

I gave, and seal'd it with th' almighty nod,

Achilles' glory to the stars to raise;

Such was our word, and fate the word obeys.

The trembling queen (th' almighty order giv'n)

Swift from th' Idæan summit shot to heav'n. 85

As some way-faring man, who wanders o'er

In thought, a length of lands he trode before,

the most ancient writers both sacred and prophane, and seems a distinguishing character of the writings of the greatest antiquity. *The word of the Lord was fulfilled*, is the principal observation in the history of the Old Testament; and *Διὸς δ' ἐτελέετο βεβλή* is the declared and most obvious moral of the Iliad. If this great moral be fit to be represented in poetry, what means so proper to make it evident, as this introducing Jupiter foretelling the events which he had decreed?

v. 86. *As some way-faring man, etc.*] The discourse of Jupiter to Juno being ended, she ascends to heaven with wonderful celerity, which the poet explains by this comparison. On other occasions he has illustrated the action of the mind by sensible images from the motion of the bodies; here he inverts the case, and shews the great velocity of Juno's flight, by comparing it to the quickness of thought. No other comparison could have equalled the speed of an heavenly being. To render this more beautiful and exact, the poet describes a traveller who revolves in his mind the several places which he has seen, and in an instant passes in imagina-

Sends forth his active mind from place to place,  
 Joins hill to dale, and measures space with space :  
 So swift flew Juno to the blest abodes, 90  
 If thought of man can match the speed of gods.  
 There sat the pow'rs in awful synod plac'd ;  
 They bow'd, and made obeysance as she pass'd,  
 Through all the brazen dome : with goblets crown'd  
 They hail her queen ; the Nectar streams around. 95  
 Fair Thetis first presents the golden bowl,  
 And anxious asks what cares disturb her soul ?

To whom the white-arm'd goddess thus replies ?  
 Enough thou know'st the tyrant of the skies,

tion from one distant part of the earth to another. Milton seems to have had it in his eye in that elevated passage :

————— *The speed of gods*

*Time counts not, tho' with swiftest minutes wing'd.*

As the sense in which we have explained this passage is exactly literal, as well as truly sublime, one cannot but wonder what should induce both Hobbes and Chapman to ramble so wide from it in their translations.

*This said, went Juno to Olympus high,  
 As when a man looks o'er an ample plain,  
 To any distance quickly goes his eye :  
 So swiftly Juno went with little pain.*

Chapman's is yet more foreign to the subject.

*But as the mind of such a man, that hath a great way  
 gone,  
 And either knowing not his way, or then would let alone  
 His purpos'd journey; is distract, and in his vex'd mind  
 Resolves now not to go, now goes, still many ways inclin'd.*

Severely bent his purpose to fulfil, 100  
 Unmov'd his mind, and unrestrain'd his will.  
 Go thou, the feasts of heav'n attend thy call ;  
 Bid the crown'd Nectar circle round the hall ;  
 But Jove shall thunder through th' ethereal dome,  
 Such stern decrees, such threat'ned woes to come, 105  
 As soon shall freeze mankind with dire surprize,  
 And damp th' eternal banquets of the skies.

The goddesses said, and fullen took her place ;  
 Blank horror sadden'd each celestial face.  
 To see the gath'ring grudge in ev'ry breast, 110  
 Smiles on her lips a spleenful joy express,  
 While on her wrinkled front, and eye-brow bent,  
 Sate stedfast care, and low'ring discontent.  
 Thus she proceeds——Attend, ye pow'rs above !  
 But know, 'tis madness to contest with Jove : 115

v. 102. *Go thou, the feasts of heav'n attend thy call*] This is a passage worthy our observation. Homer feigns, that Themis, that is, Justice, presides over the feasts of the gods ; to let us know that she ought much more to preside over the feasts of men. Eustathius.

v. 114. *Juno's speech to the gods.*] It was no sort of exaggeration what the ancients have affirmed of Homer, that the examples of all kinds of oratory are to be found in his works. The present speech of Juno is a master-piece in that sort, which seems to say one thing, and persuades another : for while she is only declaring to the gods the orders of Jupiter, at the time that she tells them they must obey, she fills them with a reluctance to do it. By representing so strongly the superiority of his power, she makes them uneasy at it, and by particularly advising that god to submit, whose temper could

Supreme he sits ; and fees, in pride of sway,  
 Your vassal godheads grudgingly obey ;  
 Fierce in the majesty of pow'r controuls,  
 Shakes all the thrones of heav'n, and bends the poles.  
 Submits, immortals ! all he wills, obey ; 120  
 And thou, great Mars, begin and shew the way.  
 Behold Ascalaphus ! behold him die,  
 But dare not murmur, dare not vent a sigh ;  
 Thy own lov'd boasted offspring lies o'erthrown,  
 If that lov'd boasted offspring be thy own. 125

' Stern Mars, with anguish for his slaughter'd son,  
 Smote his rebelling breast, and fierce begun.  
 Thus then immortals ! thus shall Mars obey :  
 Forgive me, gods, and yield my vengeance way :  
 Descending first to yon' forbidden plain, 130  
 The god of battles dares avenge the slain ;  
 Dares, though the thunder bursting o'er my head  
 Should hurl me blazing on those heaps of dead.

With that, he gives command to Fear and Flight  
 To join his rapid courfers for the fight : 135

could least brook it, she incites him to downright rebellion. Nothing can be more sly and artfully provoking, than that stroke on the death of his darling son. *Do thou, O Mars, teach obedience to us all, for it is upon thee that Jupiter has put the severest trial: Ascalaphus thy son lies slain by his means: bear it with so much temper and moderation, that the world may not think he was thy son.*

v. 134. *To Fear and Flight*——] Homer does not say, that Mars commanded they should join his horses to his chariot, which horses were called Fear and Flight.



Then grim in arms, with hasty vengeance flies ;  
 Arms, that reflect a radiance through the skies.  
 And now had Jove, by bold rebellion driv'n,  
 Discharg'd his wrath on half the host of heav'n ;  
 But Pallas springing through the bright abode, 140  
 Starts from her azure throne to calm the god.  
 Struck for th'immortal race with timely fear,  
 From frantic Mars she snatch'd the shield and spear ;  
 Then the huge helmet lifting from his head,  
 Thus, to th'impetuous homicide she said. 145

By what wild passion, furious ! art thou tost !  
 Striv'st thou with Jove ? thou art already lost.  
 Shall not the thund'rer's dread command restrain,  
 And was imperial Juno heard in vain ?  
 Back to the skies would'st thou with shame be driv'n,  
 And in thy guilt involve the host of heav'n ?  
 Ilion and Greece no more should Jove engage ;  
 The skies would yield an ampler scene of rage,  
 Guilty and guiltless find an equal fate,  
 And one vast ruin whelm th' Olympian state. 155  
 Cease then thy offspring's death unjust to call ;  
 Heroes as great have dy'd, and yet shall fall.

Fear and Flight are not the names of the horses of Mars, but the names of the two furies in the service of this god : it appears likewise by other passages, that they were his children, book xiii. v. 299. This is a very ancient mistake ; Eustathius mentions it as an error of Antimachus, yet Hobbes and most others have fallen into it.



Why should heav'n's law with foolish man comply,  
Exempted from the race ordain'd to die ?

This menace fix'd the warrior to his throne ;      160  
Sullen he fate, and curb'd the rising groan.

Then Juno call'd, Jove's orders to obey,

The winged Iris, and the god of day.

Go wait the thund'rer's will (Saturnia cry'd)

On yon' tall summit of the fount-ful Ide ;      165

There in the father's awful presence stand,

Receive, and execute his dread command.

v. 164. *Go wait the thund'rer's will.*] It is remarkable, that whereas it is familiar with the poet to repeat his errands and messages, here he introduces Juno with very few words, where she carries a dispatch from Jupiter to Iris and Apollo. She only says, "Jove commands you to attend him on mount Ida," and adds nothing of what had passed between herself and her consort before. The reason of this brevity is not only that she is highly disgusted with Jupiter, and so unwilling to tell her tale from the anguish of her heart ; but also because Jupiter had given her no commission to relate fully the subject of their discourse ; wherefore she is cautious of declaring what possibly he would have concealed. Neither does Jupiter himself, in what follows, reveal his decrees : for he lets Apollo only so far into his will, that he would have him discomfit and rout the Greeks : their good fortune, and the success which was to ensue, he hides from him, as one who favoured the cause of Troy. One may remark in this passage Homer's various conduct and discretion concerning what ought to be put in practice, or left undone ; whereby his reader may be informed how to regulate his own affairs. Eustathius.

She said, and fate: The god that gilds the day,  
And various Iris wing their airy way.

Swift as the wind, to Ida's hills they came, 170

(Fair nurse of fountains, and of savage game)

There fate th' Eternal: he, whose nod controuls  
The trembling world, and shakes the steady poles.

Veil'd in a mist of fragrance him they found,

With clouds of gold and purple circled round. 175

Well-pleas'd the thund'rer saw their earnest care,

And prompt obedience to the queen of air;

Then, (while a smile serenest his awful brow)

Commands the goddesses of the show'ry bow.

Iris! descend, and what we here ordain 180

Report to yon' mad tyrant of the main.

Bid him from fight to his own deeps repair,

Or breathe from slaughter in the fields of air.

If he refuse, then let him timely weigh

Our elder birth-right, and superior sway. 185

How shall his rashness stand the dire alarms,

If heav'n's omnipotence descend in arms?

Strives he with me, by whom his pow'r was giv'n,

And is there equal to the Lord of heav'n?

Th' almighty spoke; the goddess wing'd her flight

To sacred Ilion from th' Idæan height. 191

Swift as the rat'ling hail, or fleecy snows

Drive thro' the skies, when Boreas fiercely blows;

So from the clouds, descending Iris falls;

And to blue Neptune thus the goddess calls.

Attend the mandate of the fire above,  
 In me behold the messenger of Jove :  
 He bids thee from forbidden wars repair  
 To thy own deeps, or to the fields of air.  
 This, if refus'd, he bids thee timely weigh 200  
 His elder birth-right, and superior sway.  
 How shall thy rashness stand the dire alarms,  
 If heav'n's omnipotence descend in arms ?  
 Striv'st thou with him, by whom all pow'r is giv'n ?  
 And art thou equal to the Lord of heav'n ? 205

What means the haughty sov'reign of the skies,  
 (The king of ocean thus, incens'd, replies)  
 Rule as he will his portion'd realms on high ;  
 No vassal god, nor of his train am I.  
 Three brother-deities from Saturn came, 210  
 And ancient Rhea, earth's immortal dame :  
 Assign'd by lot, our triple rule we know ;  
 Infernal Pluto sways the shades below ;

v. 210. *Three brother-deities from Saturn came,  
 And ancient Rhea, earth's immortal dame ;  
 Assign'd by lot, our triple rule we know, etc.]*

Some have thought the Platonic philosophers drew from hence the notion of their Triad (which the Christian Platonists since imagined to be an obscure hint of the Sacred Trinity.) The Trias of Plato is well known. Τὸ αὐτὸ δὲ, ὁ νῆς ὁ δημιουργός, ἡ τῆς κόσμου ψυχὴ. In his Gorgias he tells us, Τὸν Ὅμηρον (autorom sc. fuisse) τῆς τῶν δημιουργικῶν Τριάδους ὑποστάσεως. See Procl. in Plat. Theol. l. 1. c. 5. Lucian Philopatr. Aristotle de Cælo, lib. 1. c. 1. speaking of the Ternarian number from Pythagoras, has these words ; Τὰ τρία πάντα, καὶ τὸ πρὸς

O'er the wide clouds, and o'er the starry plain,

Ethereal Jove extends his high domain :

215

My court beneath the hoary waves I keep,

And hush the roarings of the sacred deep :

Olympus, and this earth in common lie ;

What claim has here the tyrant of the sky ?

Far in the distant clouds let him controul,

220

And awe the younger brothers of the pole ;

There to his children his commands be giv'n,

The trembling, servile, second race of heav'n.

πάντη. Καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἀριστείας τῶν θεῶν χρώμεθα τῷ ἀριθμῷ τέτρω. Κατάπερ γὰρ φασιν καὶ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι τὸ πᾶν καὶ τὰ πάντα τοῖς τρισὶν ὠρῖσαι. Τελευταίη γὰρ καὶ μέσον καὶ ἀρχὴ τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἔχει τὸν τῷ παντός· ταῦτα δὲ τὸν τῆς τριάδος. From which passage Trapezuntius endeavoured very seriously to prove, that Aristotle had a perfect knowledge of the Trinity. Duport (who furnished me with this note, and who seems to be sensible of the folly of Trapezuntius) nevertheless in his Gnomologia Homerica, or comparison of our author's sentences with those of the scripture, has placed opposite to this verse that of St. John : *There are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* I think this the strongest instance I ever met with of the manner of thinking of such men, whose too much learning has made them mad.

Lactantius, de Fals. Relig. lib. 1. cap. 11. takes this fable to be a remain of ancient history, importing, that the empire of the then known world was divided among the three brothers ; to Jupiter the oriental part, which was called heaven, as the region of light, or the sun ; to Pluto the occidental, or darker regions ; and to Neptune the sovereignty of the seas.

And must I then, said she, O fire of floods !  
 Bear this fierce answer to the king of gods ? 225  
 Correct it yet, and change thy rash intent ;  
 A noble mind disdains not to repent.  
 To elder brothers guardian fiends are giv'n,  
 To scourge the wretch insulting them and heav'n.  
 Great is the profit, thus the god rejoin'd, 230  
 When ministers are blest with prudent mind :  
 Warn'd by thy words, to pow'rful Jove I yield,  
 And quit, though angry, the contended field,  
 Not but his threats with justice I disclaim,  
 The same our honours, and our birth the same. 235  
 If yet, forgetful of his promise giv'n  
 To Hermes, Pallas, and the queen of heav'n ;  
 To favour Ilion, that perfidious place,  
 He breaks his faith with half th' ethereal race ;  
 Give him to know, unless the Grecian train 240  
 Lay yon' proud structures level with the plain,

v. 228. *To elder brothers.*] Iris, that she may not seem to upbraid Neptune with weakness of judgment, out of regard to the greatness and dignity of his person, does not say that Jupiter is stronger or braver ; but attacking him from a motive not in the least invidious, superiority of age, she says sententiously, that the Furies wait upon our elders. The Furies are said to wait upon men in a double sense : either for evil, as they did upon Orestes after he had slain his mother ; or else for their good, as upon elders when they are injured, to protect them and avenge their wrongs. This is an instance that the pagans looked upon birth-right as a right divine, Eustathius.

Howe'er th' offence by other gods be past,  
The wrath of Neptune shall for ever last.

Thus speaking, furious from the field he strode,  
And plung'd into the bosom of the flood. 245

The lord of thunders from his lofty height  
Beheld, and thus bespoke the source of light.

Behold ! the god whose liquid arms are hurl'd !  
Around the globe, whose earthquakes rock the world ;  
Desists at length his rebel-war to wage, 250

Seeks his own seas, and trembles at our rage ;  
Else had my wrath, heav'n's thrones all shaking round,  
Burn'd to the bottom of the seas profound ;  
And all the gods that round old Saturn dwell,  
Had heard the thunders to the deeps of hell. 255

v. 252. *Else had our wrath, etc.*] This representation of the terrors which must have attended the conflict of two such mighty powers as Jupiter and Neptune, whereby the elements had been mixed in confusion, and the whole frame of nature endangered, is imaged in these few lines with a nobleness suitable to the occasion. Milton has a thought very like it in his fourth book, where he represents what must have happened if Satan and Gabriel had encountered :

————— *Not only Paradise*  
*In this commotion, but the starry cope*  
*Of heav'n, perhaps, and all the elements*  
*At least had gone to wreck, disturb'd and torn*  
*With violence of this conflict, had not soon*  
*Th' Almighty, to prevent such horrid fray, etc.*



Well was the crime, and well the vengeance spar'd;  
 Ev'n pow'r immense had found such battle hard.  
 Go thou, my son! the trembling Greeks alarm,  
 Shake my broad Ægis on thy active arm,  
 Be godlike Hector thy peculiar care, 260  
 Swell his bold heart, and urge his strength to war:  
 Let Ilion conquer, till th'Achaian train  
 Fly to their ships and Hellespont again:  
 Then Greece shall breathe from toils—the godhead said;  
 His will divine the son of Jove obey'd. 265  
 Not half so swift the sailing falcon flies,  
 That drives a turtle through the liquid skies;  
 As Phœbus shooting from th' Idæan brow,  
 Glides down the mountain to the plain below.  
 There Hector seated by the stream he sees, 270  
 His sense returning with the coming breeze;  
 Again his pulses beat, his spirits rise;  
 Again his lov'd companions meet his eyes;  
 Jove thinking of his pains, they past away.  
 To whom the god who gives the golden day. 275  
 Why sits great Hector from the field so far,  
 What grief, what wound, with-holds him from the war?

v. 274. *Jove thinking of his pains, they past away.*]  
 Eustathius observes, that this is a very sublime representation of the power of Jupiter, to make Hector's pains cease from the moment wherein Jupiter first turned his thoughts towards him. Apollo finds him so far recovered, as to be able to sit up, and know his friends. Thus much was the work of Jupiter; the god of health perfects the cure.

The fainting hero, as the vision bright  
 Stood shining o'er him, half unseal'd his sight:  
 What blest immortal, with commanding breath, 280  
 Thus wakens Hector from the sleep of death?  
 Has fame not told, how, while my trusty sword  
 Bath'd Greece in slaughter, and her battle gor'd,  
 The mighty Ajax with a deadly blow  
 Had almost sunk me to the shades below? 285  
 Ev'n yet, methinks, the gliding ghosts I spy,  
 And hell's black horrors swim before my eye.

To him, Apollo. Be no more dismay'd;  
 See, and be strong! the thund'rer sends thee aid,  
 Behold! thy Phœbus shall his arms employ, 290  
 Phœbus, propitious still to thee, and Troy.  
 Inspire thy warriors then with manly force,  
 And to the ships impel thy rapid horse:  
 Ev'n I will make thy fiery courfers way,  
 And drive the Grecians headlong to the sea. 295

Thus to bold Hector spoke the son of Jove,  
 And breath'd immortal ardour from above.  
 As when the pamper'd steed, with reins unbound,  
 Breaks from from his stall, and pours along the ground;

v. 298. *As when the pamper'd steed.*] This comparison is repeated from the sixth book, and we are told that the ancient critics retained no more than the two first verses and the four last in this place, and that they gave the verses two marks; by the one, which was the asterism, they intimated, that the four lines were very beautiful; but by the other, which was the obelus,

Book XV.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      155  
 With ample strokes he rushes to the flood,      300  
 To bathe his sides, and cool his fiery blood :  
 His head now freed, he tosses to the skies ;  
 His mane dishevel'd o'er his shoulders flies :  
 He snuffs the females in the well-known plain,  
 And springs, exulting, to his fields again :      305  
 Urg'd by the voice divine, thus Hector flew,  
 Full of the god ; and all his hosts pursue.  
 As when the force of men and dogs combin'd  
 Invade the mountain goat, or branching hind :  
 Far from the hunter's rage secure they lie      310  
 Close in the rock, not fated yet to die,

that they were ill placed. I believe an impartial reader, who considers the two places, will be of the same opinion.

Tasso has improved the justness of this simile in his sixteenth book, where Rinaldo returning from the arms of Armida to battle, is compared to the steed that is taken from his pastures and mares to the service of the war : the reverse of the circumstance better agreeing with the occasion.

*Qual feroce destrier, ch' al faticoso  
 Honor de l' arme vincitor sia tolto,  
 E lascivo marito in vil riposo  
 Fra gli armenti, e ne' paschi erri disciolto :  
 Se'l desta o suon di tromba, o luminoso  
 Acciar, cola tosto annitando e volto,  
 Già già brama l' arringo, e l' huom sul dorso  
 Portando, urtato riurtar nel corso.*

v. 311. *Not fated yet to die.*] Dacier has a pretty remark on this passage, that Homer extended destiny

When lo ! a lion shoots across the way !

They fly : at once the chafers and the prey.

So Greece, that late in conqu'ring troops pursu'd,

And mark'd their progress through the ranks in blood,

Soon as they see the furious chief appear, 316

Forget to vanquish, and consent to fear.

Thoas with grief observ'd his dreadful course,

Thoas, the bravest of th' Ætolian force :

Skill'd to direct the jav'lin's distant flight, 320

And bold to combat in the standing fight ;

Nor more in councils fam'd for solid sense,

Than winning words and heav'nly eloquence.

Gods ! what portent, he cry'd, these eyes invades ?

Lo ! Hector rises from the Stygian shades ! 325

We saw him, late, by thund'ring Ajax kill'd :

What god restores him to the frightened field,

And not content that half of Greece lie slain,

Pours new destruction on her sons again ?

(that is, the care of providence) even over the beasts of the field ; an opinion that agrees perfectly with true theology. In the book of Jonas, the regard of the Creator extending to the meanest rank of his creatures, is strongly expressed in those words of the Almighty, where he makes his compassion to the brute beasts one of the reasons against destroying Nineveh. *Shall I not spare the great city, in which there are more than sixscore thousand persons, and also much cattle ?* And what is still more parallel to this passage, in St. Matth. chap. 10. *Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing ? And yet one of them shall not fall to the ground, without your father.*

He comes not, Jove ! without thy pow'rful will ;      330

Lo ! still he lives, pursues, and conquers still !

Yet hear my counsel, and his worst withstand ;

The Greeks main body to the fleet command ;

But let the few whom brisker spirits warm,

Stand the first onset, and provoke the storm :      335

Thus point your arms : and when such foes appear,

Fierce as he is, let Hector learn to fear.

The warrior spoke, the list'ning Greeks obey,

Thick'ning their ranks, and form a deep array.

Each Ajax, Teucer, Merion, gave command,      340

The valiant leader of the Cretan band,

And Mars-like Meges : these the chiefs excite,

Approach the foe, and meet the coming fight.

Behind, unnumber'd multitudes attend,

To flank the navy, and the shores defend.      345

Full on the front the pressing Trojans bear,

And Hector first came tow'ring to the war.

Phœbus himself the rushing battle led ;

A veil of clouds involv'd his radiant head :

High-held before him, Jove's enormous shield      350

Portentous shone, and shaded all the field,

Vulcan to Jove th'immortal gift consign'd,

To scatter hosts, and terrify mankind.

The Greeks expect the shock ; the clamours rise

From diff'rent parts, and mingle in the skies.      355

Dire was the hiss of darts, by heroes flung,

And arrows leaping from the bow-string sung ;

These drink the life of gen'rous warriors slain;  
 Those guiltless fall, and thirst for blood in vain.  
 As long as Phœbus bore unmov'd the shield, 360  
 Sate doubtful conquest hov'ring o'er the field;  
 But when aloft he shakes it in the skies,  
 Shouts in their ears, and lightens in their eyes,  
 Deep horror seizes ev'ry Grecian breast,  
 Their force is humbled, and their fear confess. 365  
 So flies a herd of oxen, scatter'd wide,  
 No swain to guard them, and no day to guide,  
 When two fell lions from the mountain come,  
 And spread the carnage through the shady gloom.  
 Impending Phœbus pours around them fear, 370  
 And Troy and Hector thunder in the rear.  
 Heaps fall on heaps: the slaughter Hector leads;  
 First great Arcefilas, then Stichius bleeds;

v. 362. *But when aloft he shakes.*] Apollo in this passage, by this mere shaking his Ægis, without acting offensively, annoys and puts the Greeks into disorder. Eustathius thinks that such a motion might possibly create the same confusion, as hath been reported by historians to proceed from panic fears: or that it might intimate some dreadful confusion in the air, and a noise issuing from thence; a notion which seems to be warranted by Apollo's out-cry, which presently follows in the same verse. But perhaps we need not go so far to account for this fiction of Homer: the sight of a hero's armour often has the like effect in an epic poem: the shield of prince Arthur in Spenser works the same wonders with this Ægis of Apollo.



One to the bold Bœotians ever dear,  
 And one Menestheus' friend, and fam'd compeer. 375  
 Medon and Iafus, Æneas sped ;  
 This sprung from Phelus, and th' Athenians led ;  
 But hapless Medon from Oileus came ;  
 Him Ajax honour'd with a brother's name,  
 Though born of lawless love : from home expell'd, 380  
 A banish'd man, in Phylace he dwell'd,  
 Press'd by the vengeance of an angry wife,  
 Troy ends, at last, his labours and his life.  
 Mecystes next, Polydamas o'erthrew ;  
 And thee, brave Clonius ! great Agenor slew. 385  
 By Paris, Deiochus inglorious dies,  
 Pierc'd through the shoulder as he basely flies.  
 Polites' arm laid Echius on the plain ;  
 Stretch'd on one heap, the victors spoil the slain.  
 The Greeks dismay'd, confus'd, disperse or fall, 390  
 Some seek the trench, some skulk behind the wall,  
 While these fly trembling, others pant for breath,  
 And o'er the slaughter stalks gigantic Death.

v. 386.. *By Paris, Deiochus inglorious dies,  
 Pierc'd through the shoulder as he basely flies.*]

Here is one that falls under the spear of Paris, smitten in the extremity of his shoulder as he was flying. This gives occasion to a pretty observation of Eustathius, that this is the only Greek who falls by a wound in the back ; so careful is Homer of the honour of his countrymen. And this remark will appear not ill grounded, if we except the death of Eioneus in the beginning of lib. 6.

On rush'd bold Hector, gloomy, as the night ;  
 Forbids to plunder, animates the fight, 395  
 Points to the fleet: for by the gods, who flies,  
 Who dares but linger, by this hand he dies;  
 No weeping sister his cold eye shall close,  
 No friendly hand his fun'ral pyre compose.  
 Who stops to plunder, in this signal hour, 400  
 The birds shall tear him, and the dogs devour.

Furious he said ; the smarting scourge resounds ;  
 The courfers fly ; the smoaking chariot bounds :

v. 396. *For by the gods, who flies, etc.*] It sometimes happens, says Longinus, that a writer in speaking of some person, all on a sudden puts himself in that other's place, and acts his part ; a figure which marks the impetuosity and hurry of passion. It is this which Homer practises in these verses : the poet stops his narration, forgets his own person, and instantly, without any notice, puts this precipitate menace into the mouth of this furious and transported hero. How must his discourse have languished, had he stay'd to tell us, *Hector then said these, or the like words?* Instead of which, by this unexpected transition he prevents the reader, and the transition is made before the poet himself seems sensible he had made it. The true and proper place for this figure is when the time presses, and when the occasion will not allow of any delay : it is elegant then to pass from one person to another, as in that of Hecataeus. *The herald, extremely discontented at the orders he had received, gave command to the Heraclidae to withdraw. — It is no way in my power to help you ; if therefore you would not perish entirely, and if you would not involve me too in your ruin, depart, and seek a retreat among some other people.* Longinus, chap. 23.

The hoſts ruſh on; loud clamours ſhake the ſhore;  
The horſes thunder, earth and ocean rore ! 405

Apollo, planted at the trench's bound,  
Puſh'd at the bank : down ſunk th'enormous mound :  
Roll'd in the ditch the heapy ruin lay ;  
A ſudden road ! a long and ample way.

O'er the dread ſoffe (a late-impervious ſpace) 410

Now ſteeds, and men, and cars, tumultuous paſs.  
The wond'ring crouds the downward level trod :  
Before them flam'd the ſhield, and march'd the god.

Then with his hand he ſhook the mighty wall :  
And lo ! the turrets nod, the bulwarks fall. 415

Eaſy, as when aſhore an infant ſtands,  
And draws imagin'd houſes in the ſands ;  
The ſportive wanton, pleas'd with ſome new play,  
Sweeps the flight works, and faſhion'd domes away.  
Thus vaniſh'd, at thy touch, the tow'rs and walls ;  
The toil of thouſands in a moment falls. 420

The Grecians gaze around with wild deſpair,  
Confus'd, and weary all the pow'rs with pray'r ;

v. 416. *As when aſhore an infant ſtands.*] This ſimile of the ſand is inimitable ; it is not eaſy to imagine any thing more exact and emphatical to deſcribe the tumbling and confus'd heap of a wall, in a moment. Moreover the compariſon here taken from ſand is the juſter, as it riſes from the very place and ſcene before us. For the wall here demolish'd, as it was founded on the coaſt, muſt needs border on the ſand ; wherefore the ſimilitude is borrowed immediately from the ſubject matter under view. Euſtathius.

Exhort their men, with praises, threats, commands;  
 And urge the gods, with voices, eyes, and hands. 425  
 Experienc'd Nestor chief obtests the skies,  
 And weeps his country with a father's eyes.

O Jove! if ever, on his native shore,  
 One Greek enrich'd thy shrine with offer'd gore;  
 If e'er, in hope our country to behold, 430  
 We paid the fattest firstling of the fold;  
 If e'er thou sign'st our wishes with thy nod,  
 Perform the promise of a gracious god!  
 This day, preserve our navies from the flame,  
 And save the reliques of the Grecian name. 435

Thus pray'd the sage: Th' Eternal gave consent,  
 And peals of thunder shook the firmament.  
 Presumptuous Troy mistook th' accepting sign,  
 And catch'd new fury at the voice divine.

v. 428. *O Jove! if ever, etc.*] The form of Nestor's prayer in this place resembles that of Chryses in the first book. And it is worth remarking, that the poet well knew what shame and confusion the reminding one of past benefits is apt to produce. From the same topic Achilles talks with his mother, and Thetis herself accosts Jove; and likewise Phœnix, where he holds a parley with Achilles. This righteous prayer hath its wished accomplishment. Eustathius.

v. 438. *Presumptuous Troy mistook the sign.*] The thunder of Jupiter is designed as a mark of his acceptance of Nestor's prayers, and a sign of his favour to the Greeks. However, there being nothing in the prodigy particular to the Greeks, the Trojans expound it in their own favour, as they seem warranted by their present success. This self-partiality of men in appro-

As, when black tempests mix the seas and skies, 440

The roaring deeps in watry mountains rise,

Above the sides of some tall ship ascend,

Its womb they deluge, and its ribs they rend :

Thus loudly roaring, and o'er-pow'ring all,

Mount the thick Trojans up the Grecian wall ; 445

Legions on legions from each side arise :

Thick sound the keels : the storm of arrows flies.

Fierce on the ships above, the cars below,

These wield the mace, and those the jav'lin throw.

While thus the thunder of the battle rag'd, 450

And lab'ring armies round the works engag'd ;

Still in the tent Patroclus fate, to tend

The good Eurypylus, his wounded friend.

He sprinkles healing balms, to anguish kind,

And adds discourse, the med'cine of the mind. 455

priating to themselves the protection of heaven, has always been natural to them. In the same manner Virgil makes Turnus explain the transformation of the Trojan ships into nymphs, as an ill omen to the Trojans.

*Trojanos hæc monstra petunt, his Jupiter ipse  
Auxilium solitum eripuit.*—————

History furnishes many instances of oracles, which, by reason of this partial interpretation, has proved an occasion to lead men into great misfortunes : it was the case of Cræsus in his wars with Cyrus ; and a like mistake engaged Pyrrhus to make war upon the Romans.

v. 448. *On the ships above, the cars below.*] This is a new sort of battle, which Homer has never before mentioned ; the Greeks on their ships, and the Trojans in their chariots, as on a plain. Eustathius.



But when he saw, ascending up the fleet,  
 Victorious Troy; then, starting from his seat,  
 With bitter groans his sorrows he express,  
 He wrings his hands, he beats his manly breast.  
 Though yet thy state require redress, he cries, 460  
 Depart I must: what horrors strike my eyes?  
 Charg'd with Achilles' high commands I go,  
 A mournful witness of this scene of woe:  
 I haste to urge him, by his country's care,  
 To rise in arms, and shine again in war. 465  
 Perhaps some fav'ring god his soul may bend;  
 The voice is pow'rful of a faithful friend.

He spoke; and speaking, swifter than the wind  
 Sprung from the tent, and left the war behind.  
 Th' embody'd Greeks the fierce attack sustain, 470  
 But strive, though numerous, to repulse in vain.  
 Nor could the Trojans, through that firm array,  
 Force to the fleet and tents, th' impervious way.  
 As when a shipwright, with Palladian art,  
 Smooths the rough wood, and levels ev'ry part; 475

v. 472. *Nor could the Trojans—*

*Force to the fleet and tents, th' impervious way.]*

Homer always marks distinctly the place of battle; he here shews us clearly that the Trojans attacked the first line of the fleet that stood next the wall, or the vessels which were drawn foremost on the land: these vessels were a strong rampart to the tents which were pitched behind, and to the other line of the navy which stood nearer to the sea; to penetrate therefore to the tents, they must necessarily force the first line, and defeat the troops which defended it. Eustathius.



With equal hand he guides his whole design,  
By the just rule, and the directing line.

The martial leaders, with like skill and care,  
Preserv'd their line, and equal kept the war.

Brave deeds of arms through all the ranks were try'd,  
And ev'ry ship sustain'd an equal tide. 481

At one proud bark, high tow'ring o'er the fleet

Ajax the great, and godlike Hector meet;

For one bright prize the matchless chiefs contend;

Nor this the ships can fire, nor that defend; 485

One kept the shore, and one the vessel trod;

That fix'd as fate, this acted by a god.

The son of Clytius in his daring hand,

The deck approaching, shakes a flaming brand;

But pierc'd by Telamon's huge lance expires; 490

Thund'ring he falls, and drops th' extinguish'd fires.

Great Hector view'd him with a sad survey,

As stretch'd in dust before the stern he lay.

Oh! all of Trojan, all of Lycian race!

Stand to your arms, maintain this arduous space. 495

Lo! where the son of royal Clytius lies,

Ah save his arms, secure his obsequies!

This said, his eager javelin fought the foe:

But Ajax shunn'd the meditated blow.

Not vainly yet the forceful lance was thrown; 500

It stretch'd in dust unhappy Lycophron:

An exile long, sustain'd at Ajax' board,

A faithful servant to a foreign lord;

In peace, in war, for ever at his side,  
Near his lov'd master, as he liv'd, he dy'd. 505

From the high poop he tumbles on the sand,  
And lies a lifeless load, along the land.

With anguish Ajax views the piercing sight,  
And thus inflames his brother to the fight.

Teucer, behold ! extended on the shore 510

Our friend, our lov'd companion ! now no more !

Dear as a parent, with a parent's care

To fight our wars, he left his native air.

This death deplor'd to Hector's rage we owe ;

Revenge, revenge it on the cruel foe. 515

Where are those darts on which the fates attend ?

And where the bow, which Phœbus taught to bend ?

Impatient Teucer hast'ning to his aid,

Before the chief his ample bow display'd ;

The well-stor'd quiver on his shoulders hung : 520

Then his'd his arrow, and the bow-string sung.

Clytus, Pisenor's son, renown'd in fame,

(To thee, Polydamas ! an honour'd name)

Drove through the thickest of the embattel'd plains

The startling steeds, and shook his eager reins. 525

As all on glory ran his ardent mind,

The pointed death arrests him from behind :

Through his fair neck the thrilling arrow flies ;

In youth's first bloom reluctantly he dies.

Hurl'd from the lofty seat, at distance far, 530

The headlong coursers spurn his empty car ;

Till sad Polydamas the steeds restrain'd,  
And gave, Astynous, to thy careful hand ;  
Then, fir'd to vengeance, rush'd amidst the foe,  
Rage edg'd his sword, and strengthen'd every blow.

Once more bold Teucer, in his country's cause, 136  
At Hector's breast a chosen arrow draws ;

And had the weapon found the destin'd way,  
Thy fall, great Trojan ! had renown'd that day.

But Hector was not doom'd to perish then : 540

Th' all-wise disposer of the fates of men,  
Imperial Jove, his present death withstands.

Nor was such glory due to Teucer's hands.

At his full stretch as the tough string he drew,

Struck by an arm unseen, it burst in two ; 545

Down dropt the bow : the shaft with brazen head

Fell innocent, and on the dust lay dead.

Th' astonish'd archer to great Ajax cries ;

Some god prevents our destin'd enterprize :

Some god, propitious to the Trojan foe, 550

Has, from my arm unfailing, struck the bow,

And broke the nerve my hands had twin'd with art,

Strong to impel the flight of many a dart.

Since heav'n commands it, Ajax made reply,

Dismiss the bow, and lay thy arrows by ; 555

Thy arms no less suffice the lance to wield,

And quit the quiver for the pond'rous shield.

In the first ranks indulge thy thirst of fame,

Thy brave example shall the rest inflame.

Fierce as they are by long successes vain ; 560  
 To force our fleet, or ev'n a ship to gain,  
 Asks toil, and sweat, and blood : their utmost might  
 Shall find its match——No more : 'tis ours to fight.

Then Tuecer laid his faithless bow aside ;  
 The four-fold buckler o'er his shoulder ty'd ; 565  
 On his brave head a crested helm he plac'd,  
 With nodding horse-hair formidably grac'd ;  
 A dart, whose point with brass refulgent shines,  
 The warrior wields ; and his great brother joins.

This Hector saw, and thus express'd his joy. 570  
 Ye troops of Lycia, Dardanus, and Troy !

Be mindful of yourselves, your ancient fame,  
 And spread your glory with the navy's flame.  
 Jove is with us ; I saw his hand, but now,  
 From the proud archer strick his vaunted bow. 575

Indulgent Jove ? how plain thy favours shine,  
 When happy nations bear the marks divine !  
 How easy then, to see the sinking state  
 Of realms accurst, deserted, reprobate !

Such is the fate of Greece, and such is ours : 580  
 Behold, ye warriors, and exert your pow'rs,  
 Death is the worst ; a fate which all most try ;  
 And, for our country, 'tis a bliss to die.

v. 582. *Death is the worst, etc.*] It is with very great address, that to the bitterness of death, he adds the advantages that were to accrue after it. And the ancients are of opinion, that it would be as advantageous for young soldiers to read this lesson, concise as it

The gallant man, though slain in fight he be,  
 Yet leaves his nation safe, his children free ;      585  
 Entails a debt on all the grateful state ;  
 His own brave friends shall glory in his fate ;  
 His wife live honour'd, all his race succeed ;  
 And late posterity enjoy the deed !

This rouz'd the soul in ev'ry Trojan breast :      590  
 The godlike Ajax next his Greeks address.

it is, as all the volumes of Tyrtæus, wherein he endeavours to raise the spirits of his countrymen. Homer makes a noble enumeration of the parts wherein the happiness of a city consists. For having told us in another place, the three great evils to which a town when taken, is subject ; the slaughter of the men, the destruction of the place by fire, the leading of their wives and children into captivity : now he reckons up the blessings that are contrary to those calamities. To the slaughter of the men indeed he makes no opposition ; because it is not necessary to the well-being of a city, that every individual should be saved, and not a man slain. Eustathius.

v. 591. *The godlike Ajax next.*] The oration of Hector is more splendid and shining than that of Ajax, and also more solemn, from his sentiments concerning the favour and assistance of Jupiter. But that of Ajax is the more politic, fuller of management, and apter to persuade ; for it abounds with no less than seven generous arguments to inspire resolution. He exhorts his people even to death, from the danger to which their navy was exposed, which if once consumed, they were never like to get home. And as the Trojans were bid to die, so he bids his men to dare to die likewise ; and indeed with great necessity, for the Trojans may recruit after the engagement, but for the Greeks, they had no better

How long, ye warriors of the Argive race,  
 (To gen'rous Argos what a dire disgrace!)  
 How long, on these curs'd confines will ye lie,  
 Yet undetermin'd, or to live, or die ! 595  
 What hopes remain, what methods to retire,  
 If once your vessels catch the Trojan fire !  
 Mark how the flames approach, how near they fall,  
 How Hector calls, and Troy obeys his call !  
 Not to the dance that dreadful voice invites, 600  
 It calls to death, and all the rage of fights.  
 'Tis now no time for wisdom or debates ;  
 To your own hands are trusted all your fates ;  
 And better far in one decisive strife,  
 One day should end our labour, or our life ; 605  
 Than keep this hard-got inch of barren sands,  
 Still press'd, and press'd by such inglorious hands.

The list'ning Grecians feel their leader's flame,  
 And ev'ry kindling bosom pants for fame.  
 Then mutual slaughters spread on either side ; 610  
 By Hector here the Phocian Schedius dy'd ;  
 There pierc'd by Ajax, sunk Laodamas  
 Chief of the foot, of old Antenor's race.  
 Polydamas laid Otus on the sand,  
 The fierce commander of th' Epeian band. 615

way than to hazard their lives ; and if they should gain  
 nothing else by it, yet at least they would have a speedy  
 dispatch, not a lingering and dilatory destruction. Eu-  
 rathius.



His lance bold Meges at the victor threw;  
The victor stooping, from the death withdrew;  
(That valu'd life, O Phœbus ! was thy care)  
But Crœsmus' bosom took the flying spear :  
His corps fell bleeding on the slipp'ry shore ;      620  
His radiant arms triumphant Meges bore.  
Dolops, the son of Lampus rushes on,  
Sprung from the race of old Laomedon,  
And fam'd for prowess in a well-fought field ;  
He pierc'd the centre of his sounding shield :      625  
But Meges, Phyleus' ample breast-plate wore,  
(Well known in fight on Selles' winding shore,  
For king Euphetes gave the golden mail,  
Compact, and firm with many a jointed scale)  
Which oft, in cities storm'd, and battles won,      630  
Had sav'd the father, and now saves the son.  
Full at the Trojan's head he urg'd his lance,  
Where the high plumes above the helmet dance,  
New ting'd with Tyrian die : in dust below  
Shorn from the crest, the purple honours glow.      635  
Meantime their fight the Spartan king survey'd,  
And stood by Meges' side, a sudden aid,  
Through Dolops' shoulder urg'd his forceful dart,  
Which held its passage through the panting heart,  
And issu'd at his breast. With thund'ring sound      640  
The warrior falls, extended on the ground.  
In rush the conqu'ring Greeks to spoil the slain :  
But Hector's voice excites his kindred train ;

The hero most, from Hicetaon sprung,  
Fierce Melanippus, gallant, brave, and young. 645  
He (ere to Troy the Grecians cross'd the main)  
Fed his large oxen on Percote's plain ;  
But when oppress'd, his country claim'd his care,  
Return'd to Ilion, and excell'd in war :  
For this, in Priam's court he held his place, 650  
Belov'd no less than Priam's royal race.  
Him Hector singled, as his troops he led,  
And thus inflam'd him, pointing to the dead.

Lo Melanippus ! lo where Dolops lies ;  
And is it thus our royal kinsman dies ? 655  
O'ermatch'd he falls ; to two at once a prey,  
And lo ! they bear the bloody arms away !  
Come on——a distant war no longer wage,  
But hand to hand thy country's foes engage :  
Till Greece at once, and all her glory end ; 660  
Or Ilion from her tow'ry height descend,  
Heav'd from the lowest stone ; and bury all  
In one sad sepulchre, one common fall.

Hector, this said, rush'd forward on the foes :  
With equal ardour Melanippus glows : 665  
Then Ajax thus——Oh Greeks ! respect your fame,  
Respect yourselves, and learn an honest shame ;  
Let mutual rev'rence mutual warmth inspire,  
And catch from breast to breast the noble fire.  
On valour's side the odds of combat lie, 670  
The brave live glorious, or lamented die ;

The wretch that trembles in the field of fame,  
Meets death, and worse than death, eternal shame.

His gen'rous sense he not in vain imparts ;  
It sunk, and rooted in the Grecian hearts. 675

They join, they throng, they thicken at his call,  
And flank the navy with a brazen wall ;  
Shields touching shields, in order blaze above,  
And stop the Trojans, though impell'd by Jove.  
The fiery Spartan first, with loud applause, 680  
Warms the bold son of Nestor in his cause.

Is there, he said, in arms a youth like you,  
So strong to fight, so active to pursue ?  
Why stand you distant, nor attempt a deed ?  
Lift the bold lance, and make some Trojan bleed. 685

He said, and backward to the lines retir'd ;  
Forth rush'd the youth, with martial fury fir'd,  
Beyond the foremost ranks ; his lance he threw,  
And round the black battalions cast his view.  
The troops of Troy recede with sudden fear, 690  
While the swift jav'lin hiss'd along in air.  
Advancing Melanippus met the dart  
With his bold breast, and felt it in his heart :

v. 677. *And flank the navy with a brazen wall.*]  
The poet has built the Grecians a new sort of wall out  
of their arms ; and perhaps one might say, it was from  
this passage Apollo borrowed that oracle which he gave  
to the Athenians about their wall of wood ; in like man-  
ner the Spartans were said to have a wall of bones : if  
so, we must allow the god not a little obliged to the poet.  
Eustathius.

Thund'ring he falls ; his falling arms resound,  
And his broad buckler rings against the ground. 695  
The victor leaps upon his prostrate prize ;  
Thus on a roe the well-breath'd beagle flies,  
And rends his side, fresh-bleeding with the dart  
The distant hunter sent into his heart.  
Observing Hector to the rescue flew ; 700  
Bold as he was, Antilochus withdrew.  
So when a savage, ranging o'er the plain,  
Has torn the shepherd's dog, or shepherd swain ;  
While conscious of the deed, he glares around,  
And hears the gath'ring multitude resound, 705  
Timely he flies the yet-untasted food,  
And gains the friendly shelter of the wood.  
So fears the youth ; all Troy with shouts pursue,  
While stones and darts in mingled tempest flew ;  
But enter'd in the Grecian ranks, he turns 710  
His manly breast, and, with new fury burns.

Now on the fleet the tydes of Trojans drove,  
Fierce to fulfil the stern decrees of Jove :  
The fire of gods confirming Thetis' pray'r,  
The Grecian ardour quench'd in deep despair ; 715  
But lifts to glory Troy's prevailing bands,  
Swells all their hearts, and strengthens all their hands.  
On Ida's top he waits with longing eyes,  
To view the navy blazing to the skies ;  
Then, nor till then, the scale of war shall turn, 720  
The Trojans fly, and conquer'd Ilion burn.

Book XV.      HOMER'S I L I A D.      175.  
 These fates revolv'd in his almighty mind.  
 He raises Hector to the work design'd,  
 Bids him with more than mortal fury glow,  
 And drives him, like a lightning, on the foe.      725  
 So Mars, when human crimes for vengeance call,  
 Shakes his huge jav'lin, and whole armies fall.  
 Not with more rage a conflagration rolls,  
 Wraps the vast mountains, and involves the poles.  
 He foams with wrath ; beneath his gloomy brow      730  
 Like fiery meteors his red eye-balls glow :  
 The radiant helmet on his temples burns,  
 Waves when he nods, and lightens as he turns :  
 For Jove his splendor round the chief had thrown,  
 And cast the blaze of both the hosts on one.      735

v. 723. *He raises Hector, etc.*] This picture of Hector, impulsed by Jupiter, is a very finished piece, and excels all the drawings of this hero which Homer has given us in so various attitudes. He is here represented as an instrument in the hand of Jupiter, to bring about those designs the god had long projected : and as his fatal hour now approaches, Jove is willing to recompense his hasty death with this short-liv'd glory. Accordingly, this being the last scene of victory he is to appear in, the poet introduces him with all imaginable pomp, and adorns him with all the terror of a conqueror : his eyes sparkle with fire, his mouth foams with fury, his figure is compared to the god of war, his rage is equalled to a conflagration and a storm, and the destruction he causes is resembled to that which a lion makes among the herds. The poet, by this heap of comparisons, raises the idea of the hero higher than any simple description could reach.

Unhappy glories ! for his fate was near,  
 Due to stern Pallas, and Pelides' spear :  
 Yet Jove deferr'd the death he was to pay,  
 And gave what fate allow'd, the honours of a day !

Now all on fire for fame, his breast, his eyes 740  
 Burn at each foe, and single ev'ry prize ;  
 Still at the closest ranks, the thickest fight,  
 He points his ardour, and exerts his might.  
 The Grecian phalanx moveless as a tow'r  
 On all sides batter'd, yet resists his pow'r : 745  
 So some tall rock o'erhangs the hoary main,  
 By winds assail'd, by billows beat in vain,  
 Unmov'd it hears, above, the tempest blow,  
 And sees the watry mountains break below.  
 Girt in surrounding flames, he seems to fall 750  
 Like fire from Jove, and bursts upon them all :  
 Bursts as a wave that from the clouds impends,  
 And swell'd with tempests on the ship descends ;

v. 736. ——— *His fate was near*

*Due to stern Pallas, ——— ]*

It may be asked, what Pallas has to do with the Fates, or what power has she over them ? Homer speaks thus, because Minerva has already resolved to succour Achilles, and deceive Hector in the combat between these two heroes, as we find in book 22. Properly speaking, Pallas is nothing but the knowledge and wisdom of Jove, and it is wisdom which presides over the counsels of his providence ; therefore she may be looked upon as drawing all things to the fatal term to which they are decreed : Dacier.

v. 752. *Bursts as a wave, etc.* ] Longinus, observ-



White are the decks with foam ; the winds aloud  
Howl o'er the masts, and sing through ev'ry shroud :

ing that oftentimes the principal beauty of writing consists in the judicious assembling together of the great circumstances, and the strength with which they are marked in the proper place, chuses this passage of Homer as a plain instance of it. " Where, says that noble critic, in describing the terror of a tempest, he takes care to express whatever are the accidents of most dread and horror in such a situation : he is not content to tell us that the mariners were in danger, but he brings them before our eyes, as in a picture, upon the point of being every moment overwhelmed by every wave ; nay, the very words and syllables of the description, give us an image of their peril." He shews, that a poet of less judgment would amuse himself in less important circumstances, and spoil the whole effect of the image by minute, ill-chosen, or superfluous particulars. Thus Aratus endeavouring to refine upon that line,

*And instant death on ev'ry wave appears !*

He turned it thus,

*A slender plank preserves them from their fate.*

Which, by flourishing upon the thought, has lost the loftiness and terror of it, and is so far from improving the image, that it lessens and vanishes in his management. By confining the danger to a single line, he has scarce left the shadow of it ; and indeed the word *preserves* takes away even that. The same critic produces a fragment of an old poem on the Arimaspians written in this false taste, whose author, he doubts not, imagined he had said something wonderful in the following affected verses. I have done my best to give

Pale, trembling, tir'd, the sailors freeze with fears;  
 And instant death on ev'ry wave appears.  
 So pale the Greeks the eyes of Hector meet,  
 The chief so thunders, and so shakes the fleet.

As when a lion rushing from his den, 760  
 Amidst the plain of some wide-water'd fen,  
 (Where num'rous oxen, as at ease they feed,  
 At large expatiate o'er the ranker mead;)   
 Leaps on the herds before the herdsman's eyes;  
 The trembling herdsman far to distance flies: 765  
 Some lordly bull (the rest dispers'd and fled)  
 He singles out; arrests, and lays him dead.  
 Thus from the rage of Jove-like Hector flew  
 All Greece in heaps; but one he seiz'd, and slew;  
 Mycenian Periphes, a mighty name, 770  
 In wisdom great, in arms well known to fame;

them the same turn, and I believe there are those who  
 will not think them bad ones.

*Ye pow'rs! what madness! How on ships so frail,  
 Tremendous thought! can thoughtless mortals sail?  
 For stormy seas they quit the pleasing plain,  
 Plant woods in waves, and dwell amidst the main  
 Far o'er the deep, a trackless, path they go,  
 And wander oceans, in pursuit of woe.  
 No ease their hearts, no rest their eyes can find,  
 On heav'n their looks, and on the waves their mind;  
 Sunk are their spirits, while their arms they rear;  
 And gods are weary'd with their fruitless pray'r.*

The minister of stern Euryſtheus' ire  
 Againſt Alcides, Copreus, was his fire :  
 The ſon redeem'd the honours of the race,  
 A ſon as gen'rous as the fire was baſe ; 775  
 O'er all his country's youth conspicuous far  
 In ev'ry virtue, or of peace or war :  
 But doom'd to Hector's ſtronger force to yield !  
 Againſt the margin of his ample ſhield  
 He ſtruck his haſty foot : his heels up-ſprung ; 780  
 Supine he fell ; his brazen helmet rung.  
 On the fall'n chief th' invading Trojan preſt,  
 And plung'd the pointed jav'lin in his breaſt.  
 His circling friends, who ſtrove to guard too late  
 Th' unhappy hero ; fled, or ſhar'd his fate. 785

Chas'd from the foremoſt line, the Grecian train  
 Now man the next, receding tow'rd the main :  
 Wedg'd in one body at the tents they ſtand,  
 Wall'd round with ſterns, a gloomy, deſp'rate band.  
 Now manly ſhame forbids th' inglorious flight : 790  
 Now fear itſelf confines them to the fight :  
 Man courage breathes in man ; but Neſtor moſt  
 (The ſage preſerver of the Grecian hoſt)  
 Exhorts, adjures, to guard theſe utmoſt ſhores ;  
 And by their parents, by themſelves, implores, 795  
 O friends ! be men : your gen'rous breaſts inflame  
 With mutual honour, and with mutual ſhame !

v. 796. *Neſtor's ſpeech.*] This popular harangue of Neſtor, is juſtly extolled as the ſtrongeſt and moſt per-

Think of your hopes, your fortunes ; all the care  
 Your wives, your infants, and your parents share :  
 Think of each living father's rev'rend head ; 800  
 Think of each ancestor with glory dead ;  
 Absent, by me they speak, by me they sue ;  
 They ask their safety, and their fame, from you :

suasive piece of oratory imaginable. It contains in it every motive by which men can be affected ; the preservation of their wives and children, the secure possession of their fortunes, the respect of their living parents, and the due regard for the memory of those that were departed : by these he diverts the Grecians from any thoughts of flight in the article of extreme peril. Eustathius.

This noble exhortation is finely imitated by Tasso, Jerusalem, lib. 10.

————— *O valoroso, hor via con questa*

*Faccia, a ritor la preda a noi rapita.*

*L'immagine ad alcuno in mente desta,*

*Glìe la figura quasi, e glìe l' addita*

*De la pregante patria e de la mesta*

*Supplice famigliuola sbigottita.*

*Crede (dicea) che la tua patria spieghi*

*Per la mia lingua in tai parole i preghi.*

*Guarda tu le mie leggi, e i sacri tempi*

*Fa, ch' io del sangue mio non bagni, e lavi,*

*Afficura le virgini de gli empì,*

*E i sepolchri, e le cinere de gli avi.*

*A te piangendo i lor passati tempi*

*Mostran la bianca chioma i vecchi gravi :*

*A te la moglie, e le mammelle, e'l petto,*

*Le cune, e i figli, e'l marital suo letto.*

The gods their fates on this one action lay,  
And all are lost, if you desert the day. 805

He spoke, and round him breath'd heroic fires ;  
Minerva seconds what the sage inspires.

The mist of darkness Jove around them threw  
She clear'd, restoring all the war to view ;  
A sudden ray shot beaming o'er the plain, 810

And shew'd the shores, the navy, and the main :  
Hector they saw, and all who fly, or fight,  
The scene wide opening to the blaze of light.  
First of the field great Ajax strikes their eyes,  
His port majestic, and his ample size : 815

A pond'rous mace, with studs of iron crown'd,  
Full twenty cubits long, he swings around ;  
Nor fights like others fix'd to certain stands,  
But looks a moving tow'r above the bands ;  
High on the decks, with vast gigantic stride, 820  
The godlike hero stalks from side to side.

So when a horseman from the watry mead  
(Skill'd in the manage of the bounding steed)  
Drives four fair coursers, practis'd to obey,  
To some great city through the public way ; 825

v. 814. *First of the field, great Ajax.*] In this book, Homer, to raise the valour of Hector, gives him Neptune for an antagonist ; and to raise that of Ajax, he first opposed him to Hector, supported by Apollo, and now the same Hector impelled and seconded by Jupiter himself. These are strokes of a master-hand. Eustathius.

v. 824. *Drives four fair coursers, etc.*] The comparison which Homer here introduces, is a demonstra-

Safe in his art, as side by side they run,  
 He shifts his seat, and vaults from one to one ;  
 And now to this, and now to that he flies ;  
 Admiring numbers follow with their eyes.  
 From ship to ship thus Ajax swiftly flew, 830  
 No less the wonder of the warring crew.  
 As furious Hector thunder'd threats aloud,  
 And rush'd enrag'd before the Trojan croud ;  
 Then swift invades the ships, whose beaky proes  
 Lay rank'd contiguous on the bending shores : 835  
 So the strong eagle from his airy height,  
 Who marks the swans or cranes embody'd flight,

tion that the art of mounting and managing horses was brought to so great a perfection in these early times, that one man could manage four at once, and leap from one to the other, even when they run full speed. But some object, that the custom of riding was not known in Greece at the time of the Trojan war : besides, they say the comparison is not just, for the horses are said to run full speed, whereas the ships stand firm and unmoved. Had Homer put the comparison in the mouth of one of his heroes, the objection had been just, and he guilty of an inconsistency : but it is he himself who speaks : saddle-horses were in use in his age, and any poet may be allowed to illustrate pieces of antiquity by images familiar to his own times. This is sufficient for the first objection : nor is the second more reasonable ; for it is not absolutely necessary, that comparisons should correspond in every particular ; it suffices if there be a general resemblance. This is only introduced to shew the agility of Ajax, who passes swiftly from one vessel to another, and is therefore entirely just. Eustathius.



Stoops down impetuous, while they light for food,  
 And stooping, darkens with his wings the flood.  
 Jove leads him on with his almighty hand,      840  
 And breathes fierce spirits in his following band.  
 The warring nations meet, the battle roars,  
 Thick beats the combat on the founding prores.  
 Thou wouldst have thought, so furious was their fire,  
 No force could tame them, and no toil could tire;      845  
 As if new vigour from new fights they won,  
 And the long battle was but then begun.  
 Greece yet unconquer'd, kept alive the war,  
 Secure of death, confiding in despair; -  
 Troy in proud hopes, already view'd the main      850.  
 Bright with the blaze, and red with heroes slain!  
 Like strength is felt from hope, and from despair,  
 And each contends, as his were all the war.

'Twas thou, bold Hector! whose resistless hand  
 First seiz'd a ship on that contested strand;      855  
 The same which dead Protefilaus bore,  
 The first that touch'd th' unhappy Trojan shore:  
 For this, in arms the warring nations stood,  
 And bath'd their gen'rous breasts with mutual blood.  
 No room to poize the lance, or bend the bow;      860  
 But hand to hand, and man to man they grow:

v. 856. *The same which dead Protefilaus bore.*] Ho-  
 mer feigns that Hector laid hold of the ship of the dead  
 Protefilaus, rather than on that of any other, that he  
 might not disgrace any of his Grecian generals. Eu-  
 statheus.

Wounded, they wound ; and seek each other's hearts  
 With faulchions, axes, swords, and shorten'd darts.  
 The faulchions ring, shields rattle, axes sound,  
 Swords flash in air, or glitter on the ground ; 865  
 With streaming blood the slipp'ry shores are dy'd,  
 And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide.

Still raging Hector with his ample hand  
 Grasps the high stern, and gives this loud command.  
 Haste, bring the flames ! the toil of ten long years  
 Is finish'd : and the day desir'd appears ! 871  
 This happy day with acclamations greet,  
 Bright with destruction of yon' hostile fleet.  
 The coward counsels of a tim'rous throng  
 Of rev'rend dotards, check'd our glory long : 875

v. 874. *The coward counsels of a tim'rous throng  
 Of rev'rend dotards———]*

Homer adds this with a great deal of art and prudence, to answer beforehand all the objections which he well foresaw might be made, because Hector never till now attacks the Grecians in their camp, or endeavours to burn their navy. He was retained by the elders of Troy, who, frozen with fear at the sight of Achilles, never suffered him to march from the ramparts. Our author forgets nothing that has the resemblance of truth ; but he had yet a farther reason for inserting this, as it exalts the glory of his principal hero : these elders of Troy thought it less difficult to defeat the Greeks, though defended with strong entrenchments, while Achilles was not with them ; than to overcome them without entrenchments when he assisted them. And this is the reason that they prohibited Hector before, and permit him now, to sally upon the enemy. Dacier.

Too long Jove lull'd us with lethargic charms,  
 But now in peals of thunder calls to arms :  
 In this great day he crowns our full desires,  
 Wakes all our force, and seconds all our fires.

He spoke—the warriors, at his fierce command, 880  
 Pour a new deluge on the Grecian band.  
 Ev'n Ajax paus'd, so thick the jav'ins fly,  
 Step'd back, and doubted or to live, or die.  
 Yet where the oars are plac'd, he stands to wait  
 What chief approaching dares attempt his fate : 885  
 Ev'n to the last, his naval charge defends,  
 Now shakes his spear, now lifts, and now protends ;  
 Ev'n yet, the Greeks with piercing shouts inspires,  
 Amidst attacks, and deaths, and darts, and fires.

O friends ! O heroes ! names for ever dear, 890  
 Once sons of Mars, and thunderbolts of war !

v. 877. *But now Jove calls to arms, etc.*] Hector seems to be sensible of an extraordinary impulse from heaven, signified by these words, *the most mighty hand of Jove pushing him on*. It is no more than any other person would be ready to imagine, who should rise from a state of distress or indolence, into one of good fortune, vigour, and activity. Eustathius.

v. 890. *The speech of Ajax.*] There is great strength, closeness, and spirit in this speech, and one might, like many critics, employ a whole page in extolling and admiring it in general terms. But sure the perpetual rapture of such commentators, who are always giving us exclamations instead of criticisms, may be a mark of great admiration, but of little judgment. Of what use is this either to a reader who has a taste, or to one who has not ? To admire a fine passage, is what the former will do

Ah! yet be mindful of your old renown,

Your great forefathers virtues and your own.

What aids expect you in this utmost strait?

What bulwarks rising between you and fate? 895

No aids, no bulwarks your retreat attend,

No friends to help, no city to defend.

without us, and what the latter cannot be taught to do by us. However we ought gratefully to acknowledge the good-nature of most people, who are not only pleased with this superficial applause given to fine passages, but are likewise inclined to transfer to the critic, who only points at those beauties, part of the admiration justly due to the poet. This is a cheap and easy way to fame, which many writers ancient and modern, have pursued with great success. Formerly indeed this sort of authors had modest, and were humbly content to call their performances only *Florilegia* or *Poesies*: but some of late have passed such collections on the world for criticisms of great depth and learning, and seem to expect the same flowers should please us better, in these poultry nosegays of their own making up, than in their native gardens where they grew. As this practice of extolling without giving reasons is very convenient for most writers, so it excellently suits the ignorance or laziness of most readers, who will come into any sentiment rather than take the trouble of refuting it. Thus the complement is mutual: for as such critics do not tax their readers with any thought to understand them, so their readers in return, advance nothing in opposition to such critics. They may go roundly on, admiring and exclaiming in this manner; *What an exquisite spirit of poetry—How beautiful a circumstance—What delicacy of sentiments—With what art has the poet—In how sublime and just a manner—How finely imagined—How wonderfully beautiful and poetical—* And so proceed, without one

This spot is all you have, to lose or keep :  
 There stand the Trojans, and here rolls the deep.  
 'Tis hostile ground you tread ; your native lands 900  
 Far, far from hence : your fates are in your hands.  
 Raging he spoke ; nor farther wastes his breath,  
 But turns his jav'lin to the work of death.  
 Whate'er bold Trojan arm'd his daring bands,  
 Against the sable ships with flaming bands, 905  
 So well the chief his naval weapon sped,  
 The luckless warrior at his stern lay dead :  
 Full twelve, the boldest, in a moment fell,  
 Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.

reason to interrupt the course of their eloquence, most comfortably and ignorantly apostrophising to the end of the chapter.





T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K XVI.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The sixth battle ; the acts and death of Patroclus.

*PATROCLUS (in pursuance of the request of Nestor in the eleventh book) intreats Achilles to suffer him to go to the assistance of the Greeks with Achilles's troops and armour. He agrees to it, but at the same time charges him to content himself with rescuing the fleet, without farther pursuit of the enemy. The armour, horses, soldiers, and officers of Achilles are described. Achilles offers a libation for the success of his friend, after which Patroclus leads the Myrmidons to battle. The Trojans at the sight of Patroclus in Achilles's armour, taking him for that hero, are cast into the utmost consternation: he beats them off from the vessels, Hector himself flies, Sarpedon is killed, though Jupiter was averse to his fate. Several other particulars of the battle are described ; in the heat of which, Patroclus, neglecting the orders of Achilles, pursues the foe to the walls of Troy ; where Apollo repulses and disarms him, Euphorbus wounds him, and Hector kills him : which concludes the book.*

**S**O warr'd both armies on th' ensanguin'd shore,  
While the black vessels smoak'd with human gore.

We have at the entrance of this book one of the most beautiful parts of the Iliad. The two different charac-

Meantime Patroclus to Achilles flies ;

The streaming tears fall copious from his eyes ;

ters admirably sustained in the dialogue of the two heroes, wherein there is not a period but strongly marks not only their natural temper, but that particular disposition of mind in either, which arises from the present state of affairs. We see Patroclus touched with the deepest compassion for the misfortunes of the Greeks, (whom the Trojan, had forced to retreat to their ships, and which ships were on the point of burning) prostrating himself before the vessel of Achilles, and pouring out his tears at his feet. Achilles, struck with the grief of his friend, demands the cause of it. Patroclus, pointing to the ships, where the flames already began to rise, tells him he is harder than the rocks or sea which lay in prospect before them, if he is not touched with so moving a spectacle, and can see in cold blood his friends perishing before his eyes. As nothing can be more natural and affecting than the speech of Patroclus, so nothing is more lively and picturesque than the attitude he is here described in.

The *pathetic* of Patroclus' speech is finely contrasted by the *fierte* of that of Achilles. While the former is melting with sorrow for his countrymen, the utmost he can hope from the latter, is but to borrow his armour and troops ; to obtain his personal assistance he knows is impossible. At the very instant that Achilles is moved to ask the cause of his friend's concern, he seems to say that nothing could deserve it but the death of their fathers : and in the same breath speaks of the total destruction of the Greeks as of too slight a cause for tears. Patroclus, at the opening of this speech, dares not name Agamemnon even for being wounded ; and after he has tried to bend him by all the arguments that could affect an human breast, he concludes by supposing that some oracle or supernatural inspiration is the cause that

Not faster, trickling to the plains below, 5  
 From the tall rock the fable waters flow.  
 Divine Pelides, with compassion mov'd,  
 Thus spoke, indulgent to his best belov'd.

with-holds his arms. What can match the fierceness of his answer? Which implies, that not the oracles of heaven itself should be regarded, if they stood in competition with his resentment: that if he yields, it must be through his own mere motive: the only reason he has ever to yield, is that nature itself cannot support anger eternally: and if he yields now, it is only because he had before determined to do so at a certain time, Iliad 9. v. 773. That time was not till the flames should approach to his own ships, till the last article of danger, and that not of danger to Greece, but to himself. Thus his very pity has the sternest qualifications in the world. After all, what is it he yields to? only to suffer his friend to go in his stead, just to save them from present ruin, but he expressly forbids him to proceed any farther in their assistance, than barely to put out the fires, and secure his own and his friends return into their country: and all this concludes with a wish, that if it were possible, every Greek and every Trojan might perish except themselves. Such is that wrath of Achilles, that more than wrath, as the Greek *μῆνις* implies, which Homer has painted in so strong a colouring.

v. 8. *Indulgent to his best belov'd*] The friendship of Achilles and Patroclus is celebrated by all antiquity: and Homer, notwithstanding the anger of Achilles was his professed subject, has found the secret to discover, through that very anger, the softer parts of his character. In this view we shall find him generous in his temper, despising gain and booty, and as far as his honour is not concerned, fond of his mistress, and easy to his friend: not proud, but when injured; and not more revengeful when ill-used, than grateful and gentle when

Patroclus, say, what grief thy bosom bears,  
 That flows so fast in these unmanly tears ? 10  
 No girl, no infant whom the mother keeps  
 From her lov'd breast, with fonder passion weeps ;

respectfully treated. " Patroclus (says Philostratus, who  
 " probably grounds his assertion on some ancient traditi-  
 " on) was not so much elder than Achilles as to pretend  
 " to direct him, but of a tender, modest, and unassum-  
 " ing nature ; constant and diligent in his attendance,  
 " and seeming to have no affections but those of his  
 " friends." The same author has a very pretty passage,  
 where Ajax is introduced inquiring of Achilles, " which  
 " of all his warlike actions were the most difficult and  
 " dangerous to him ? He answers, Those which he un-  
 " dertook for the sake of his friends. And which, con-  
 " tinues Ajax, were the most pleasing and easy ! The  
 " very same, replies Achilles. He then asks him, Which  
 " of all the wounds he ever bore in battle was the most  
 " painful to him ? Achilles answers, That which he  
 " received from Hector. But Hector, says Ajax, never  
 " gave you a wound. Yes, replies Achilles, a mortal  
 " one, when he slew my friend Patroclus."

It is said in the life of Alexander the Great, that  
 when that prince visited the monuments of the heroes at  
 Troy, and placed a crown upon the tomb of Achilles ;  
 his friend Hephæstion placed another on that of Patro-  
 clus, as an intimation of his being to Alexander what  
 the other was to Achilles. On which occasion the say-  
 ing of Alexander is recorded ; *That Achilles was hap-  
 py indeed, for having had such a friend to love him liv-  
 ing, and such a poet to celebrate him dead.*

v. 11. *No girl, no infant, etc.*] I know the obvious  
 translation of this passage makes the comparison consist  
 only in the tears of the infant, applied to those of Pa-  
 troclus. But certainly the idea of the simile will be  
 much

Not more the mother's soul that infant warms,  
 Clung to her knees, and reaching at her arms,  
 Than thou hast mine ! Oh tell me to what end 15  
 Thy melting sorrows thus pursue thy friend ?

Griev'st thou for me, or for my martial band ?  
 Or come sad tidings from our native land ?  
 Our fathers live, (our first, most tender care)  
 Thy good Menœtius breathes the vital air, 20  
 And hoary Peleus yet extends his days ;  
 Pleas'd in their age to hear their children's praise.

Or may some meaner cause thy pity claim ?  
 Perhaps yon' reliques or the Grecian name,  
 Doom'd in their ships to sink by fire and sword, 25  
 And pay the forfeit of their haughty lord ?  
 Whate'er the cause, reveal thy secret care,  
 And speak those sorrows which a friend would share.

A sigh, that instant, from his bosom broke,  
 Another follow'd, and Patroclus spoke. 30

much finer, if we comprehend also in it the mother's fondness and concern, awakened by this uneasiness of the child, which no less aptly corresponds with the tenderness of Achilles on the sight of his friend's affliction. And there is yet a third branch of the comparison, in that pursuit, and constant application the infant makes to the mother, in the same manner as Patroclus follows Achilles with his grief, till he forces him to take notice of it. I think, all these circumstances laid together, nothing can be more affecting or exact in all its views, than this similitude ; which, without that regard, has perhaps seemed but low and trivial to an unreflecting reader.



Let Greece at length with pity touch thy breast,  
 Thyself a Greek; and once, of Greeks the best!  
 Lo! ev'ry chief that might her fate prevent,  
 Lies pierc'd with wounds, and bleeding in his tent.  
 Eurypylus, Tydides, Atreus' son, 35  
 And wise Ulysses, at the navy groan  
 More for their country's wounds, than for their own.

v. 31. *Let Greece at length with pity touch thy breast.*]  
 The commentators labour to prove that the words in the original, which begin this speech, *Μὴ νενέσσω*, *Be not angry*, are not meant to desire Achilles to bear no farther resentment against the Greeks, but only not to be displeased at the tears which Patroclus sheds for their misfortune. Patroclus, they say, was not so imprudent to begin his intercession in that manner, when there was need of something more insinuating. I take this to be an excess of refinement: the purpose of every period in his speech is to persuade Achilles to lay aside his anger; why then may he not begin by desiring it? The whole question is, whether he may speak openly in favour of the Greeks in the first half of the verse, or in the latter? For in the same line he represents their distress.

————τοῖον γὰρ ἄχος βεβίηκεν Ἀχαιῶς.

It is plain he treats him without much reserve, calls him implacable, inexorable, and even mischievous (for *αἰνέειν* implies no less.) I do not see wherein the caution of this speech consists; it is a generous, unartful petition, whereof Achilles's nature would much more approve, than of all the artifice of Ulysses, (to which he expressed his hatred in the ninth book, v. 412.)

v. 35. *Eurypylus, Tydides, Atreus' son,  
 And wise Ulysses.*————]

Patroclus, in mentioning the wounded princes to Achil-



Their pain, soft arts of pharmacy can ease,  
Thy breast alone no lenitives appease.

May never rage like thine my soul enslave, 40

O great in vain ! unprofitably brave !

Thy country slighted in her last distress,

What friend, what man, from thee shall hope redress ?

No—men unborn, and ages yet behind,

Shall curse that fierce, that unforgiving mind. 45

O man unpitying ! if of man thy race ;

But sure thou spring'st not from a soft embrace,

Nor ever am'rous hero caus'd thy birth,

Nor ever tender goddess brought thee forth.

Some rugged rock's hard entrails gave thee form, 50

And raging seas produc'd thee in a storm,

les, takes care not to put Agamemnon first, lest that odious name striking his ear on a sudden, should shut it against the rest of his discourse: neither does he name him last, for fear Achilles dwelling upon it should fall into passion: but he slides it into the middle, mixing and confounding it with the rest, that it might not be taken too much notice of, and that the names which precede and follow it may diminish the hatred it might excite. Wherefore he does not so much as accompany it with an epithet.

I think the foregoing remark of Eustathius is very ingenious, and I have given into it so far, as to chuse rather to make Patroclus call him Atreus' son than Agamemnon, which yet farther softens it, since thus it might as well be imagined he spoke of Menelaus, as of Agamemnon.

A foul well-fuited that tempestuous kind,  
So rough thy manners, so untam'd thy mind.

If some dire oracle thy breast alarm,  
If ought from Jove, or Thetis, stop thy arm, 55  
Some beam of comfort yet on Greece may shine,  
If I but lead the Myrmidonian line :  
Clad in thy dreadful arms if I appear,  
Proud Troy shall tremble, and desert the war :  
Without thy person Greece shall win the day, 60  
And thy mere image chase her foes away.  
Press'd by fresh forces, her o'erlabour'd train  
Shall quit the ships, and Greece respire again.

Thus, blind to fate ! with supplicating breath,  
Thou beg'st his arms, and in his arms thy death. 65

v. 61. *And thy mere image chase her foes away.*] It is hard to conceive a greater complement, or one that could more touch the warlike ambition of Achilles, than this which Homer puts into the mouth of Patroclus. It was also an encomium which he could not suspect of flattery ; since the person who made it desires to hazard his life upon the security that the enemy could not support the sight of the very armour of Achilles : and indeed Achilles himself seems to entertain no less a thought, in the answer to this speech, where he ascribes the flight of Troy to the blazing of his helmet : a circumstance wonderfully fine, and nobly exalting the idea of this hero's terrible character. Besides all this, Homer had it in his view to prepare hereby the wonderful incident that is to ensue in the eighteenth Book, where the very flight of Achilles from his ship turns the fortune of the war.

Unfortunately good ! a boding sigh  
Thy friend return'd ; and with it, this reply.

Patroclus ! thy Achilles knows no fears :  
Nor words from Jove, nor oracles he hears ;  
Nor ought a mother's caution can suggest ; 70  
The tyrant's pride lies rooted in my breast.

My wrongs, my wrongs, my constant thought engage,  
Those my sole oracles, inspire my rage :

I made him tyrant : gave him power to wrong  
Ev'n me : I felt it ; and shall feel it long. 75

The maid, my black-ey'd maid, he forc'd away.

Due to the toils of many a well-fought day ;

Due to my conquest of her father's reign ;

Due to the votes of all the Grecian train.

From me he forc'd her ; me, the bold and brave ; 80

Disgrac'd, dishonour'd, like the meanest slave.

But bear we this——the wrongs I grieve are past ;

'Tis time our fury should relent at last :

I fix'd its date ; the day I wish'd appears :

Now Hector to my ships his battle bears,

The flames my eyes, the shouts invade my ears.

Go then Patroclus ! court fair honour's charms

In Troy's fam'd fields, and in Achilles' arms ;

Lead forth my martial Myrmidons to fight,

Go save the fleets, and conquer in my right. 90

See the thin reliques of their baffled band,

At the last edge of yon' deserted land !

Behold all Ilion on their ships descends ;

How the cloud blackens, how the storm impends !

It was not thus, when, at my sight amaz'd, 95

Troy saw and trembled, as this helmet blaz'd :

Had not th' injurious king our friendship lost,

Yon' ample trench had bury'd half her host,

No camps, no bulwarks now the Trojans fear,

Those are not dreadful, no Achilles there : 100

No longer flames the lance of Tydeus' son ;

No more your gen'ral calls his heroes on :

v. 101. *No longer flames the lance of Tydeus' son.*]  
By what Achilles here says, joining Diomed to Agamemnon in this taunting reflection, one may justly suspect there was some particular disagreement and emulation between these two heroes. This we may suppose to be the more natural, because Diomed was of all the Greeks confessedly the nearest in fame and courage to Achilles, and therefore the most likely to move his envy, as being the most likely to supply his place. The same sentiments are to be observed in Diomed with regard to Achilles ; he is always confident in his own valour, and therefore in their greatest extremities he nowhere acknowledges the necessity of appeasing Achilles, but always in council appears most forward and resolute to carry on the war without him. For this reason he was not thought a fit ambassador to Achilles ; and upon return from the embassy, he breaks into a severe reflection, not only upon Achilles, but even upon Agamemnon, who had sent this embassy to him. *I wish thou hadst not sent these supplications and gifts to Achilles ; his insolence was extreme before, but now his arrogance will be intolerable ; let us not mind whether he goes or stays, but do our duty and prepare for the battle.*

Hector, alone, I hear ; his dreadful breath  
 Commands your slaughter, or proclaims your death.  
 Yet now, Patroclus, issue to the plain ;  
 Now save the ships, the rising fires restrain,  
 And give the Greeks to visit Greece again.  
 But heed my words, and mark a friend's command,  
 Who trusts his fame and honours in thy hand,  
 And from thy deeds expects, th' Achaian host  
 Shall render back the beauteous maid he lost :  
 Rage uncontroul'd through all the hostile crew,  
 But touch not Hector, Hector is my due.

110

Eustathius observes, that Achilles uses this particular expression concerning Diomed,

Οὐ γὰρ Τυδείδῃ Διομήδεος ἐν παλάμῃσι  
 Μαίνεται ἐγχείη —————

because it was the same boasting expression Diomed had applied to himself, Iliad 8. v. 111. of the original. But this having been said only to Nestor in the heat of fight, how can we suppose Achilles had notice of it? This observation shews the great diligence, if not the judgment, of the good archbishop.

v. 111. *Shall render back the beauteous maid.*] But this is what the Greeks had already offered to do, and which he has refused ; this then is an inequality in Achilles's manners. Not at all : Achilles is ambitious ; when he refused these presents the Greeks were not low enough, he would not receive them till they were reduced to the last extremity, and till he was sufficiently revenged by their losses. Dacier.

v. 113. *But touch not Hector.*] This injunction of Achilles is highly correspondent to his ambitious character ; he is by no means willing that the conquest of



Though Jove in thunder should command the war,  
Be just, consult my glory, and forbear.

115

Hector should be atchieved by any hand but his own : in that point of glory he is jealous even of his dearest friend. This also wonderfully strengthens the idea we have of his implacability and resentment ; since at the same time that nothing can move him to assist the Greeks in the battle, we see it is the utmost force upon his nature to abstain from it. by the fear he manifests, lest any other should subdue this hero.

The verse I am speaking of,

Τὲς ἄλλας ἐνάριζ' ἀπὸ δ' Ἑκτορος ἴσχεο χεῖρας,

is cited by Diogenes Laertius as Homer's, but not to be found in the editions before that of Barnes's. It is certainly one of the instructions of Achilles to Patroclus, and therefore properly placed in this speech ; but I believe better after

————— ποτὶ δ' ἀγλαὰ δῶρα πόρωσιν,

than where he has inserted it four lines above : for Achilles's instructions not beginning till ver. 83.

Πείθεο δ', ὥς τοι ἐγὼ μύθε τέλος ἐν φρεσὶ θέλω,

it is not so proper to divide this material one from the rest. Whereas, according to the method I propose, the whole context will lie in this order. *Obeys my injunctions, as you consult my interest and honour. Make as great a slaughter of the Trojans as you will, but abstain from Hector. And as soon as you have repulsed them from the ships, be satisfied and return: for it may be fatal to pursue the victory to the walls of Troy.*

v. 115. *Consult my glory, and forbear.*] Achilles tells Patroclus that if he pursues the foe too far, whether he shall be victor or vanquished, it must prove either way prejudicial to his glory. For, by the former, the Greeks having no more need of Achilles's aid, will not



The fleet once sav'd, desist from farther chace,  
Nor lead to Ilion's walls the Grecian race;  
Some adverse god thy rashness may destroy;  
Some god, like Phœbus, ever kind to Troy.  
Let Greece redeem'd from this destructive strait,      120  
Do her own work, and leave the rest to fate.  
Oh! would to all th'immortal pow'rs above,  
Apollo, Pallas, and almighty Jove!

restore him his captive, nor try any more to appease him by presents: by the latter, his arms would be left in the enemy's hands, and he himself upbraided with the death of Patroclus. Dacier.

v. 122. *Oh! would to all, etc.*] Achilles from his overflowing gall, vents this execration: The Trojans he hates as professed enemies, and he detests the Grecians as people who had with calmness overlooked his wrongs. Some of the ancient critics, not entering into the manners of Achilles, would have expunged this imprecation, as uttering an universal malevolence to mankind. This violence agrees perfectly with his implacable character. But one may observe, at the same time, the mighty force of friendship, if for the sake of his dear Patroclus he will protect and secure those Greeks, whose destruction he wishes. What a little qualifies this bloody wish, is, that we may suppose it spoken with great unreservedness, as in secret, and between friends.

Monf. de la Motte has a lively remark upon the absurdity of this wish. Upon the supposition that Jupiter had granted it, if all the Trojans and Greeks were destroyed, and only Achilles and Patroclus left to conquer Troy, he asks what would be the victory without any enemies, and the triumph without any spectators? But the answer is very obvious; Homer intends to paint

That not one Trojan might be left alive,  
 And not a Greek of all the race survive; 125  
 Might only we the vast destruction shun,  
 And only we destroy th' accursed town!

Such conf'rence held the chiefs; while on the strand,  
 Great Jove with conquest crown'd the Trojan band.  
 Ajax no more the sounding storm sustain'd, 130  
 So thick, the darts an iron tempest rain'd;

a man in passion; the wishes and schemes of such an one are seldom conformable to reason; and the manners are preserved the better, the less they are represented to be so.

This brings into my mind that curse in Shakespear, where that admirable master of nature makes Northumberland, in the rage of his passion, wish for an universal destruction.

———— *Now let not nature's hand  
 Keep the wild flood confin'd! Let order die,  
 And let the world no longer be a stage,  
 To feed contention in a ling'ring act:  
 But let one spirit of the first-born Cain  
 Reign in all bosoms, that each heart being set  
 On bloody courses, the rude scene may end,  
 And darkness be the burier of the dead!*

v. 130. *Ajax no more, etc.*] This description of Ajax wearied out with battle, is a passage of exquisite life and beauty: yet what I think nobler than the description itself, is what he says at the end of it, that his hero, even in this excess of fatigue and languor, could scarce be moved from his post by the efforts of a whole army. Virgil has copied the description very exactly, *Æn.* 9.

On his tir'd arm the weighty buckler hung ;  
 His hollow helm with falling jav'lin's rung.  
 His breath, in quick, short pantings, comes, and goes ;  
 And painful sweat from all his members flows. 135  
 Spent and o'erpower'd, he barely breathes at most ;  
 Yet scarce an army stirs him from his post :  
 Dangers on dangers all around him grow,  
 And toil to toil, and woe succeeds to woe.

*Ergo nec clypeo juvenis subsistere tantum  
 Nec dextra valet : injectis sic undique telis  
 Obruitur. Strepit assiduo cava tempora circum  
 Tinnitu galea, et saxis solida æra fatiscunt :  
 Discussæque jubæ capiti, nec sufficit umbo  
 Ictibus : ingeminant hastis et Troes, et ipse  
 Fulmineus Mnestheus ; tum toto corpore sudor  
 Liquitur, et piceum, nec respirare potestas.  
 Flumen agit ; fessos quatit ager anhelitus artus.*

The circumstances which I have marked in a different character are improvements upon Homer, and the last verse excellently expresses, in the short catching up of the numbers, the quick, short panting, represented in the image. The reader may add to the comparison an imitation of the same place in Tasso, Canto 9. St. 97.

*Fatto intanto ha il soldan cio, ch' e concesso  
 Fare a terrena forza; hor piu non puote :  
 Tutto e sangue e sudore ; un grave, e spesso  
 Anhelar gli ange il petto, e i fianche scote.  
 Langue sotto lo scudo il brachio oppresso,  
 Gira la destra il ferro in pigre rote ;  
 Spessa, e non taglia, e divenendo ottuso  
 Perduto il brando omni di brando ha l' uso.*

Say, muses, thron'd above the starry frame, 140  
How first the navy blaz'd with Trojan flame?

Stern Hector wav'd his sword: and standing near  
Where furious Ajax ply'd his ashen spear,  
Full on the lance a stroke so justly sped,  
That the broad faulchion lopp'd its brazen head: 145  
His pointless spear the warrior shakes in vain;  
The brazen head falls sounding on the plain.  
Great Ajax saw, and own'd the hand divine,  
Confessing Jove, and trembling at the sign;  
Warn'd, he retreats. Then swift from all sides pour  
The hissing brands; thick streams the fiery show'r; 151

v. 148. *Great Ajax saw, and own'd the hand divine,  
Confessing Jove, and trembling at the sign.*]

In the Greek there is added an explication of this sign, which has no other allusion to the action, but a very odd one in a single phrase or Metaphor.

——— ὃ ῥα πάγχυ μαχης ἐπὶ μῆδεα κείρει  
Zeus ὑψόρεμέτης, Τρώεσσι δὲ βέλετο νικην.

Which may be translated,

*So seem'd their hopes cut off by heav'n's high lord,  
So doom'd to fall before the Trojan sword.*

Chapman endeavours to account for the meanness of this conceit, by the gross wit of Ajax; who seeing the head of his lance cut off, took it into his fancy, that Jupiter would in the same manner cut off the counsels and schemes of the Greeks. For to understand this far-fetch'd apprehension gravely as the commentators have done, is indeed (to use the words of Chapman) most dull and ajantical. I believe no man will blame me for leaving these lines out of the text.

O'er the high stern the curling volumes rise,  
And sheets of rolling fmoak involve the skies.

Divine Achilles view'd the rising flames,  
And smote his thigh, and thus aloud exclaims. 155

Arm, arm, Patroclus ! Lo, the blaze aspires !  
The glowing ocean reddens with the fires.

Arm, ere our vessels catch the spreading flame ;  
Arm, ere the Grecians be no more a name ;

I haste to bring the troops—The hero said ; 160  
The friend with ardour, and with joy obey'd.

He cas'd his limbs in brass ; and first around  
His manly legs, with silver buckles bound  
The clasping greaves ; then to his breast applies  
The flamy cuirass, of a thousand dyes ; 165

v. 154. *Achilles view'd the rising flames.*] This event is prepared with a great deal of art and probability. That effect which a multitude of speeches was not able to accomplish, one lamentable spectacle, the sight of the flames, at length brings to pass, and moves Achilles to compassion. This it was, say the ancients, that moved the tragedians to make visible representations of misery ; for the spectators beholding people in unhappy circumstances, find their souls more deeply touched, than by all the strains of rhetoric. Eustathius.

v. 162. *He cas'd his limbs in brass, etc.*] Homer does not amuse himself here to describe these arms of Achilles at length, for besides that the time permits it not, he reserves this description for the new armour which Thetis shall bring that hero ; a description which will be placed in a more quiet moment, and which will give him all the leisure of making it, without requiring any force to introduce it. Eustathius.



Emblaz'd with studs of gold his faulchion shone

In the rich belt, as in a starry zone :

Achilles' shield his ample shoulders spread,

Achilles' helmet nodded o'er his head :

Adorn'd in all his terrible array,

170

He flash'd around intolerable day.

Alone, untouch'd, Pelides' jav'lin stands,

Not to be pois'd but by Pelides' hands ;

From Pelion's shady brow the plant intire

Old Chiron rent, and shap'd it for his fire;

175

Whose son's great arm alone the weapon wields,

The death of heroes, and the dread of fields.

Then brave Automedon (an honour'd name,

The second to his lord in love and fame,

v. 172. *Alone, untouch'd, Pelides' jav'lin stands.*] This passage affords another instance of the stupidity of the commentators, who are here most absurdly inquisitive after the reasons why Patroclus does not take the spear, as well as the other arms of Achilles? He thought himself a very happy man, who first found out, that Homer had certainly given this spear to Patroclus, if he had not foreseen, that when it should be lost in his future unfortunate engagement, Vulcan could not furnish Achilles with another; being no joiner, but only a smith. Virgil, it seems, was not so precisely acquainted with Vulcan's disability to profess the two trades; since he has, without any scruple, employed him in making a spear, as well as the other arms, for Æneas. Nothing is more obvious than this thought of Homer, who intended to raise the idea of his hero, by giving him such a spear as no other could wield: the description of it in this place is wonderfully pompous.



In peace his friend, and partner of the war) 180

The winged courfers harness'd to the car.

Xanthus and Balius, of immortal breed,

Sprung from the wind, and like the wind in speed ;

v. 183. *Sprung from the wind.*] It is a beautiful invention of the poet, to represent the wonderful swiftness of the horses of Achilles, by saying they were begotten by the western wind. This fiction is truly poetical, and very proper in the way of natural allegory. However it is not altogether improbable our author might have designed it even in the literal sense: nor ought the notion to be thought very extravagant in a poet, since grave naturalists have seriously vouched the truth of this kind of generation. Some of them relate, as an undoubted piece of natural history, that there was anciently a breed of this kind of horses in Portugal, whose dams were impregnated by a western wind: Varro, Columella, and Pliny, are all of this opinion. I shall only mention the words of Pliny, Nat. Hist. l. 8. c. 42. *Constat in Lusitania circa Olyssiponem oppidum, et Tagum amnem, equas Favonio flante obversas animalem concipere spiritum, idque partum fieri et gigni perniciosissimum.* See also the same author, lib. 4. cap. 22. l. 16. c. 25. Possibly Homer had this opinion in view, which we see has authority more than sufficient to give it place in poetry. Virgil has given us a description of this manner of conception, Georgic 3.

*Continuoque avidis ubi subdita flamma medullis,  
Vere magis (quia vere calor redit ossibus) illæ  
Ore omnes versæ in Zephyrum, stant rupibus altis,  
Exceptantque leves auras: et sæpe sine ullis  
Conjugiis, vento gravidæ, mirabile dictu,  
Saxa per et scopulos et depressas convalles  
Diffugiunt.———*

Whom the wing'd Harpye, swift Podarge, bore,  
 By Zephyr pregnant on the breezy shore. 185  
 Swift Pedasus was added to their side,  
 (Once great Aetion's, now Achilles' pride)  
 Who, like in strength, in swiftness, and in grace,  
 A mortal courser, match'd th' immortal race.

Achilles speeds from tent to tent, and warms 190  
 His hardy Myrmidons to blood and arms.  
 All breathing death, around their chief they stand,  
 A grim, terrific, formidable band :  
 Grim as voracious wolves, that seek the springs,  
 When scalding thirst their burning bowels wrings, 195

v. 186. *Swift Pedasus was added to their side.*] Here was a necessity for a spare horse (as in another place Nestor had occasion for the same) that if by any misfortune one of the other horses should fall, there might be a fresh one ready at hand to supply his place. This is good management in the poet, to deprive Achilles not only of his charioteer and his arms, but of one of his inestimable horses. Eustathius.

v. 194. *Grim as voracious wolves, etc.*] There is scarce any picture in Homer so much in the savage and terrible way, as this comparison of the Myrmidons to wolves: it puts one in mind of the pieces of Spagnolett, or Salvator Rosa: each circumstance is made up of images very strongly coloured and horridly lively. The principal design is to represent the stern looks and fierce appearance of the Myrmidons, a gaunt and ghastly train of raw-boned bloody-minded fellows. But besides this, the poet seems to have some farther views in so many different particulars of the comparison: their eager desire of fight is hinted at by the wolves thirsting after water: their strength and vigour for the battle is in-

(When some tall stag, fresh-slaughter'd in the wood,  
Has drench'd their wide insatiate throats with blood)  
To the black fount they rush, a hideous throng,  
With paunch distended, and with lolling tongue,

timated by their being filled with food : and as these beasts are said to have their thirst sharper after they are gorged with prey ; so the Myrmidons are strong and vigorous with ease and refreshment, and therefore more ardently desirous of the combate. This image of their strength is inculcated by several expressions both in the simile and the application, and seems designed in contrast to the other Greeks, who are all wasted and spent with toil.

We have a picture much of this kind given us by Milton, lib. 10. where death is let loose into the new creation, to glut his appetite, and discharge his rage upon all nature.

——— *As when a flock*

*Of rav'nous fowls, tho' many a league remote,  
Against the day of battle, to a field  
Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lur'd  
With scent of living carcases, design'd  
For death the following day, in bloody fight.  
So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd  
His nostril wide into the murky air,  
Sagacious of his quarry from afar,*

And by Tasso, Canto 10. St. 2. of the furious Soldan;  
covered with blood, and thirsting for fresh slaughter.

*Cum dal chiuso ovil cacciato viene  
Lupo tal' hor, che fugge, e si nasconde;  
Che se ben del gran ventre omai ripiene  
Ha l' ingorde voragini profonde.*

Fire fills their eye, their black jaws belch the gore, 200  
And gorg'd with slaughter, still they thirst for more.

Like furious, rush'd the Myrmidonian crew,  
Such their dread strength, and such their deathful view,

High in the midst the great Achilles stands,  
Directs their order, and the war commands. 205

He, lov'd of Jove, had launch'd for Ilion's shores  
Full fifty vessels, mann'd with fifty oars :  
Five chosen leaders the fierce bands obey,  
Himself supreme in valour, as in sway.

First march'd Menestheus, of celestial birth, 210  
Deriv'd from thee, whose waters wash the earth,  
Divine Sperchius ! Jove-descended flood !

A mortal mother mixing with a god.  
Such was Menestheus, but miscall'd by fame  
The son of Borus that espous'd the dame. 215

Eudorus next ; whom Polymele the gay  
Fam'd in the graceful dance, produc'd to day.

*Avido pur di sangue anco suor tienne*

*La lingua, e'l sugge de la labbra immonde,*

*Tal' ei sen gia dopo il sanguigno stratio*

*De la sua cupa fame anco non satio.*

v. 211. *Deriv'd from thee, whose waters, etc.*] Homer seems resolved that every thing about Achilles shall be miraculous. We have seen his very horses are of celestial origin ; and now his commanders, though vulgarly reputed the sons of men, are represented as the real offspring of some deity. The poet thus enhances the admiration of his chief hero by every circumstance with which his imagination could furnish him.

Her, fly Cellenius lov'd, on her would gaze,  
 As with swift step she form'd the running maze:  
 To her high chamber from Diana's quire, 220  
 The god pursu'd her, urg'd, and crown'd his fire.  
 The son confess'd his father's heav'nly race,  
 And hir'd his mother's swiftness in the chace.  
 Strong Echeclus, blest in all those charms,  
 That pleas'd a god, succeeded to her arms; 225  
 Not conscious of those loves, long hid from fame,  
 With gifts of price he sought and won the dame:  
 Her secret offspring to her fire she bare;  
 Her fire caress'd him with a parent's care.

Pisander follow'd; matchless in his art 230  
 To wing the spear, or aim the distant dart;  
 No hand so sure of all th' Emathian line,  
 Or if a surer, great Patroclus! thine.

The fourth by Phoenix's grave command was grac'd,  
 Lærces' valiant offspring led the last. 235

Soon as Achilles with superior care  
 Had call'd the chiefs, and order'd all the war,

v. 220. *To her high chamber.*] It was the custom of those times to assign the uppermost rooms to the women, that they might be the farther removed from commerce: wherefore Penelope, in the *Odyssey*, mounts up into a garret, and there sits to her business. So Priam, in the sixth book, ver. 248. had chambers for the ladies of his court, under the roof of his palace.

The Lacedæmonians called these high apartments *ᾠα*; and as the word also signifies *eggs*, it is probable it was this that gave occasion to the fable of Helen's birth, who is said to be born from an egg. Eustathius.



This stern remembrance to his troops he gave :  
Ye far-fam'd Myrmidons, ye fierce and brave !  
Think with what threats you dar'd the Trojan throng,  
Think what reproach these ears endur'd so long,   241  
“ Stern son of Peleus, (thus ye us'd to say,  
While restless, raging in your ships you lay)  
“ Oh nurs'd with gall, unknowing how to yield !  
“ Whose rage defrauds us of so fam'd a field.   245  
“ If that dire fury must for ever burn,  
“ What make we here ? Return, ye chiefs, return !”  
Such were your words— Now, warriors, grieve no more.  
Lo there the Trojans ! bathe your swords in gore !  
This day shall give you all your soul demands ;   250  
Glut all your hearts ! and weary all your hands !  
Thus while he rous'd the fire in ev'ry breast,  
Close, and more close, the list'ning cohorts prest ;  
Ranks wedg'd in ranks ; of arms a steely ring  
Still grows, and spreads, and thickens round the king.  
As when a circling wall the builder forms,   256  
Of strength defensive against winds and storms,  
Compacted stones the thick'ning work compose,  
And round him wide the rising structure grows.  
So helm to helm, and crest to crest they throng,   260  
Shield urg'd on shield, and man drove man along ;  
Thick, undistinguish'd plumes together join'd,  
Float in one sea, and wave before the wind.  
Far o'er the rest, in glitt'ring pomp appear  
There bold Automedon ; Patroclus here ;   265



Brothers in arms, with equal fury fir'd ;  
Two friends, two bodies with one soul inspir'd.

But mindful of the gods Achilles went  
To the rich coffer in his shady tent :  
There lay on heaps his various garments roll'd, 270  
And costly furs, and carpets stiff with gold.  
(The presents of the silver-footed dame)  
From thence he took a bowl, of antique frame,  
Which never man had stain'd with ruddy wine,  
Nor rais'd in off'rings to the pow'rs divine, 275  
But Peleus' son ; and Peleus' son to none  
Had rais'd in off'rings, but to Jove alone.  
This ting'd with sulphur, sacred first to flame,  
He purg'd ; and wash'd it in the running stream.  
Then cleans'd his hands ; and fixing for a space 280  
His eyes on heav'n, his feet upon the place  
Of sacrifice, the purple draught he pour'd  
Forth in the midst : and thus the god implor'd.

v. 283. *And thus the god implor'd.*] Though the character of Achilles every where shews a mind sway'd with unbounded passions, and entirely regardless of all human authority and law ; yet he preserves a constant respect to the gods, and appears as zealous in the sentiments and actions of piety as any hero of the Iliad ; who indeed are all remarkable this way. The present passage is an exact description and perfect ritual of the ceremonies on these occasions. Achilles, though an urgent affair called for his friend's assistance, would not yet suffer him to enter the fight, till in a most solemn manner he had recommended him to the protection of Jupiter : and this I think a stronger proof of his tender-

O thou supreme ! high thron'd all height above !

O great Pelasgic, Dodonæan Jove !

285

ness and affection for Patroclus, than either the grief he expressed at his death, or the fury he shewed to revenge it.

v. 285. *Dodonæan Jove.*] The frequent mention of oracles in Homer, and the ancient authors, may make it not improper to give the reader a general account of so considerable a part of the Grecian superstition ; which I cannot do better than in the words of my friend Mr. Stanyan, in his excellent and judicious abstract of the Grecian History.

“ The oracles were ranked among the noblest and  
 “ most religious kinds of divination ; the design of  
 “ them being to settle such an immediate way of con-  
 “ verse with their gods, as to be able by them not on-  
 “ ly to explain things intricate and obscure, but also  
 “ to anticipate the knowledge of future events ; and  
 “ that with far greater certainty than they could hope  
 “ for from men, who out of ignorance and prejudice  
 “ must sometimes either conceal or betray the truth.  
 “ So that this became the only safe way of deliberating  
 “ upon affairs of any consequence, either public or  
 “ private. Whether to proclaim war, or conclude a  
 “ peace ; to institute a new form of government, or en-  
 “ act new laws ; all was to be done with the advice  
 “ and approbation of the oracle, whose determinations  
 “ were always held sacred and inviolable. As to the  
 “ causes of oracles, Jupiter was looked upon as the  
 “ first cause of this, and all other sorts of divination ;  
 “ he had the book of fate before him, and out of that  
 “ revealed either more or less, as he pleased, to infe-  
 “ rior dæmons. But to argue more rationally, this  
 “ way of access to the gods has been branded as one of  
 “ the earliest and grossest pieces of priestcraft, that ob-  
 “ tained in the world. For the priests, whose depen-

Who 'midst surrounding frosts, and vapours chill,  
Preside on bleak Dodona's vocal hill :

“ dance was on the oracles, when they found the  
“ cheat had got sufficient footing, allowed no man to  
“ consult the gods without costly sacrifices and rich pre-  
“ sents to themselves : and as few could bear this ex-  
“ pence, it served to raise their credit among the com-  
“ mon people by keeping them at an awful distance.  
“ And to heighten their esteem with the better and weal-  
“ thier sort, even they were only admitted upon a few  
“ stated days : by which the thing appeared still more  
“ mysterious, and for want of this good management,  
“ must quickly have been seen through, and fall to the  
“ ground. But whatever juggling there was as to the  
“ religious part, oracles had certainly a good effect as  
“ to the public ; being admirably suited to the genius  
“ of a people, who would join in the most desperate  
“ expedition, and admit of any change of government,  
“ when they understood by the oracle it was the irre-  
“ sistible will of the gods. This was the method Mi-  
“ nos, Lycurgus, and all the famous law-givers took ;  
“ and indeed they found the people so intirely devoted  
“ to this part of religion, that it was generally the ea-  
“ siest, and sometimes the only way of winning them  
“ into a compliance. And then they took care to have  
“ them delivered in such ambiguous terms, as to ad-  
“ mit of different constructions according to the exigen-  
“ cy of the times : so that they were generally interpre-  
“ ted to the advantage of the state, unless sometimes  
“ there happened to be bribery or flattery in the case ;  
“ as when Demosthenes complained that the Pythia  
“ spoke as Philip would have her. The most nume-  
“ rous, and of greatest repute, were the oracles of  
“ Apollo, who, in subordination to Jupiter, was ap-  
“ pointed to preside over, and inspire all sorts of pro-  
“ phets and diviners. And amongst these, the Del-

(Whose groves, the Selli, race austere ! surround,  
Their feet unwash'd, their slumbers on the ground ;

“ phian challenged the first place, not so much in re-  
 “ spect of its antiquity, as its perspicuity and certain-  
 “ ty ; insomuch that the answers of the Tripos came  
 “ to be used proverbially for clear and infallible truths.  
 “ Here we must not omit the first Pythia or priestess of  
 “ this famous oracle in heroic verse. They found a se-  
 “ cret charm in numbers, which made every thing look  
 “ pompous and weighty. And hence it became the ge-  
 “ neral practice of legislators and philosophers, to de-  
 “ liver their laws and maxims in that dress : and  
 “ scarce any thing in those ages was writ of excellence  
 “ or moment but in verse. This was the dawn of  
 “ poetry, which soon grew into repute ; and so long  
 “ as it served to such noble purposes as religion and  
 “ government, poets were highly honoured, and admit-  
 “ ted into a share of the administration. But by that  
 “ time it arrived to any perfection, they pursued more  
 “ mean and servile ends ; and as they prostituted their  
 “ muse and debased the subject, they sunk proportion-  
 “ ably in their esteem and dignity. As to the history  
 “ of oracles, we find them mentioned in the very in-  
 “ fancy of Greece, and it is as uncertain when they  
 “ were finally extinct, as when they began. For they  
 “ often lost their prophetic faculty for some time, and  
 “ recovered it again. I know it is a common opinion,  
 “ that they were universally silenced upon our Saviour’s  
 “ appearance in the world : and if the devil had been  
 “ permitted for so many ages to delude mankind, it  
 “ might probably have been so. But we are assured  
 “ from history, that several of them continued till the  
 “ reign of Julian the apostate, and were consulted by  
 “ him : and therefore I look upon the whole business  
 “ as of human contrivance ; an egregious imposture  
 “ founded upon superstition, and carried on by policy  
 “ and

Who hear, from rustling oaks, thy dark decrees ; 290  
And catch the fates, low-whisper'd in the breeze.)

“ and interest, till the brighter oracles of the holy scriptures dispelled these mists of error and enthusiasm.”

v. 285. *Pelasgic, Dodonean Jove.*] Achilles invokes Jupiter with these particular appellations, and represents to him the services performed by these priests and prophets ; making these honours, paid in his own country, his claim for the protection of this deity. Jupiter was looked upon as the first cause of all divination and oracles, from whence he had the appellation of *πανομφαίος*, Iliad 8. v. 250. The first oracle of Dodona was founded by the Pelasgi, the most ancient of all the inhabitants of Greece, which is confirmed by this verse of Hesiod, preserved by the scholiast on Sophocles Trachin.

Δωδώνην, φηγόν τε Πελασγῶν ἔδραν ἦκεν.

The oaks of this place were said to be endowed with voice, and prophetic spirit ; the priests who gave answers concealing themselves in these trees ; a practice which the pious frauds of succeeding ages have rendered not improbable.

v. 288. *Whose groves, the Selli, race austere, etc.*] Homer seems to me to say clearly enough, that these priests lay on the ground and forbore the bath, to honour by these austerities the god they served : for he says, σοὶ ναῖσαι ἀνιπτόπυδις, that is σοὶ can, in my opinion, only signify for you, that is to say, to please you, and for your honour. This example is remarkable, but I do not think it singular ; and the earliest antiquity may furnish us with the like of Pagans, who, by an austere life tried to please their gods. Nevertheless I am obliged to say, that Strabo, who speaks at large of these Selli in his seventh book, has not taken this au-



Hear, as of old ! Thou gav'st, at Thetis' pray'r,  
Glory to me, and to the Greeks despair :

sterity of life for an effect of their devotion, but for a remain of the grossness of their ancestors ; who, being barbarians, and straying from country to country, had no bed but the earth, and never used a bath. But it is no way unlikely that what was in the first Pelasgians, who founded this oracle, only custom and use, might be continued by these priests through devotion. How many things do we at this day see, which were in their original only ancient manner, and which are continued through zeal, and a spirit of religion ? It is very probable that these priests by this hard living had a mind to attract the admiration and confidence of a people who loved luxury and delicacy so much. I was willing to search into antiquity for the original of these Selli, priests of Jupiter, but found nothing so ancient as Homer ; Herodotus writes in his second book, that the oracle of Dodona was the ancientest in Greece, and that it was a long time the only one ; but what he adds, that it was founded by an Ægyptian woman, who was the priestess of it, is contradicted by this passage of Homer, who shews, that in the time of the Trojan war this temple was served by men called Selli, and not by women. Strabo informs us of a curious ancient tradition, importing, that this temple was at first built in Thessaly, that from thence it was carried into Dodona ; that several women who had placed their devotion there, followed it ; and that in process of time the priestesses used to be chosen from among the descendents of those women. To return to these Selli, Sophocles, who, of all the Greek poets, is he who has most imitated Homer, speaks in like manner of these priests in one of his plays, where Hercules says to his son Hillus ; “ I will declare to thee a new oracle, which perfectly  
“ agrees with this ancient one ; I myself having en-



Lo to the dangers of the fighting field

The best, the dearest of my friends, I yield; 295

“tered into the sacred wood inhabited by the austere  
“Selli, who lie on the ground, writ this answer of the  
“oak, which is consecrated to my father Jupiter, and  
“which renders his oracles in all languages.” Dacier.

v. 288.] Homer, in this verse, uses a word which I think singular and remarkable, *ὑποφῆται*. I cannot believe that it was put simply for *προφῆται*, but am persuaded that this term includes some particular sense, and shews some custom but little known, which I would willingly discover. In the Scholia of Didymus there is this remark: “They called those who served in the  
“temple, and who explained the oracles rendered by  
“the priest, *hypophets*, or *under-prophets*.” It is certain, that there were in the temple servitors, or subaltern ministers, who, for the sake of gain, undertook to explain the oracles which were obscure. This custom seems very well established in the Ion of Euripides; where that young child (after having said that the priestess is seated on the tripod, and renders the oracles which Apollo dictates to her) addresses himself to those who serve in the temple, and bids them go and wash in the Castalian fountain, to come again into the temple, and explain the oracles to those who should demand the explication of them. Homer therefore means to shew, that these Selli were, in the temple of Dodona, those subaltern ministers that interpreted the oracles. But this, after all, does not appear to agree with the present passage: for, besides that the custom was not established in Homer’s time, and that there is no footstep of it founded in that early age; these Selli, of whom Homer speaks, are not here ministers subordinate to others; they are plainly the chief priests. The explication of this word therefore must be elsewhere sought, and I shall offer my conjecture, which I ground

Though still determin'd, to my ships confin'd,

Patroclus gone, I stay but half behind,

Oh! be his guard thy providential care,

Confirm his heart, and string his arm to war:

Prefs'd by his single force, let Hector see

300

His fame in arms, not owing all to me.

But when the fleets are sav'd from foes and fire,

Let him, with conquest and renown retire:

Preserve his arms, preserve his social train,

And safe return him to these eyes again!

305

Great Jove consents to half the chief's request,

But heav'n's eternal doom denies the rest;

upon the nature of this oracle of Dodona; which was very different from all the other oracles: in all other temples the priests delivered the oracles which they had received from their gods, immediately: but in the temple of Dodona, Jupiter did not utter his oracles to his priests, but to his Selli; he rendered them to the oaks, and the wonderful oaks rendered them to the priests, who declared them to those who consulted them: so these priests were not properly *προφῆται*, *prophets*, since they did not receive those answers from the mouth of their god immediately; but they were *ὑποφῆται*, *under-prophets*, because they received them from the mouth of the oaks, if I may say so. The oaks, properly speaking, were the prophets, the first interpreters of Jupiter's oracles; and the Selli were *ὑποφῆται*, *under-prophets*, because they pronounced what the oaks had said. Thus Homer, in one single word, includes a very curious piece of antiquity. Dacier.

v. 306. *Great Jove consents to half.*] Virgil has finely imitated this in his 11th Æneid,

To free the fleet was granted to his pray'r;  
 His safe return, the winds dispers'd in air.  
 Back to his tent the stern Achilles flies,  
 And waits the combat with impatient eyes.

310

Meanwhile the troops beneath Patroclus' care,  
 Invade the Trojans, and commence the war.  
 As wasps, provok'd by children in their play,  
 Pour from their mansions by the broad high-way, 315

*Audiit, et voti Phæbus succedere partem  
 Mente dedit: partem volucres dispersit in auras.  
 Sterneret ut subita turbatam morte Camillam  
 Annuit oranti; reducem ut patria alta videret  
 Non dedit, inque notos vocem vertere procellæ.*

v. 314. *As wasps provok'd, etc.*] One may observe, that though Homer sometimes takes his similitudes from the meanest and smallest things in nature, yet he orders it so as by their appearance to signalize and give lustre to his greatest heroes. Here he likens a body of Myrmidons to a nest of wasps, not on account of their strength and bravery, but of their heat and resentment. Virgil has imitated these humble comparisons, as when he compares the builders of Carthage to bees. Homer has carried it a little farther in another place, where he compares the soldiers to flies, for their busy industry and perseverance about a dead body; not diminishing his heroes by the size of these small animals, but raising his comparisons from certain properties inherent in them, which deserve our observation. Eustathius.

This brings into my mind a pretty rural simile in Spenser, which is very much in the simplicity of the old father of poetry.

In swarms the guiltless traveller engage,  
 Whet all their stings, and call forth all their rage:  
 All rise in arms, and with a gen'ral cry  
 Assert their waxen domes, and buzzing progeny.  
 Thus from the tents the fervent legion swarms, 320  
 So loud their clamours, and so keen their arms,  
 Their rising rage Patroclus' breath inspires,  
 Who thus inflames them with heroic fires.

O warriors, part'ners of Achilles' praise!  
 Be mindful of your deeds in ancient days: 325  
 Your godlike master let your acts proclaim,  
 And add new glories to his mighty name.  
 Think, your Achilles sees you fight: Be brave,  
 And humble the proud monarch whom you save.

Joyful they heard, and kindling as he spoke, 330  
 Flew to the fleet, involv'd in fire and smoke.  
 From shore to shore the doubling shouts resound,  
 The hollow ships return a deeper sound.  
 The war stood still, and all around them gaz'd,  
 When great Achilles' shining armour blaz'd: 335

*As gentle shepherd in sweet even-tide,  
 When ruddy Phæbus 'gins to welke in west,  
 High on a hill, his flock to viewen wide,  
 Marks which do bite their hasty supper best;  
 A cloud of cumb'rous gnats do him molest,  
 All striving to infix their feeble stings,  
 That from their noyance he no whit can rest,  
 But with his clownish hands their tender wings  
 He brusheth oft, and oft doth mar their murmurings.*

Troy saw, and thought the dread Achilles nigh,  
At once they see; they tremble, and they fly.

Then first thy spear, divine Patroclus ! flew,  
Where the war rag'd, and where the tumult grew.  
Close to the stern of that fam'd ship, which bore 340  
Unblest Protefilaus to Ilion's shore,  
The great Pæonian, bold Pyræchmes, stood ;  
(Who led his bands from Axius' winding flood)  
His shoulder-blade receives the fatal wound ;  
The groaning warrior pants upon the ground. 345  
His troops, that see their country's glory slain,  
Fly diverse, scatter'd o'er the distant plain.  
Patroclus' arm forbids the spreading fires,  
And from the half-burn'd ship proud Troy retires :  
Clear'd from the smoak the joyful navy lies ; 350  
In heaps on heaps the foe tumultuous flies ;  
Triumphant Greece her rescu'd decks ascends,  
And loud acclaim the starry region rends.  
So when thick clouds inwrap the mountain's head,  
O'er heav'n's expanse like one black ceiling spread :

v. 354. *So when thick clouds, etc.*] All the commentators take this comparison in a sense different from that in which it is here translated. They suppose Jupiter is here described cleaving the air with a flash of lightning, and spreading a gleam of light over a highmountain, which a black cloud held buried in darkness. The application is made to Patroclus falling on the Trojans, and giving respite to the Greeks, who were plunged in obscurity. Eustathius gives this interpretation. but, at the same time, acknowledges it improper in this com-



Sudden, the thund'rer with a flashing ray, 356  
 Bursts through the darkness, and lets down the day :  
 The hills shine out, the rocks in prospect rise,  
 And streams, and vales, and forests strike the eyes ;

parison to represent the extinction of the flames by the darting of lightning. This explanation is solely founded on the expression *εσπονησέμεθα Ζεὺς fulgurator Jupiter*, which epithet is often applied when no such action is supposed. The most obvious signification of the words in this passage, gives a more natural and agreeable image, and admits of a juster application. The simile seems to be of Jupiter dispersing a black cloud which had covered a high mountain, whereby a beautiful prospect, which was before hid in darkness, suddenly appears. This is applicable to the present state of the Greeks, after Patroclus had extinguished the flames, which began to spread clouds of smoke over the fleet. It is Homer's design in his comparisons to apply them to the most obvious and sensible image of the thing to be illustrated ; which his commentators too frequently endeavour to hide by moral and allegorical refinements ; and thus injure the poet more, by attributing to him what does not belong to him, than by refusing him what is really his own.

It is much the same image with that of Milton in his second book, though applied in a very different way.

*As when from mountain tops the dusty clouds  
 Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread  
 Heav'n's chearful face ; the low'ring element  
 Scouls o'er the darkned landskip snow or show'r ;  
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet  
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,  
 The birds their notes renew, the bleating herds  
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.*



Book XVI.     H O M E R's I L I A D.     225

The smiling scene wide opens to the fight,     360

And all th' unmeasur'd Æther flames with light.

But Troy repuls'd, and scatter'd o'er the plains,

Forc'd from the navy, yet the fight maintains.

Now ev'ry Greek some hostile hero slew,

But still the foremost, bold Patroclus flew ;     365

As Areilycus had turn'd him round,

Sharp in his thigh he felt the piercing wound ;

The brazen pointed spear, with vigour thrown,

The thigh transfix'd, and broke the brittle bone :

Headlong he fell. Next Thoas was thy chance,     370

Thy breast, unarm'd, receiv'd the Spartan lance.

Phylides' dart (as Amphiclus drew nigh)

His blow prevented, and transpierc'd his thigh,

Tore all the brawn, and rent the nerves away ;

In darkness, and in death, the warrior lay.     375

In equal arms two sons of Nestor stand,

And two bold brothers of the Lycian band ;

By great Antilochus, Atymnius dies,

Pierc'd in the flank, lamented youth ! he lies.

Kind Maris, bleeding in his brother's wound,     380

Defends the breathless carcase on the ground ;

Furious he flies, his murd'rer to engage,

But godly Thrasimēd prevents his rage,

Between his arm and shoulder aims a blow ;

His arm falls spouting on the dust below :     385

He sinks, with endless darkness cover'd o'er,

And vents his soul effus'd with gushing gore.

Slain by two brothers, thus two brothers bleed,  
 Sarpedon's friends, Amisodarus' feed ;  
 Amisodarus, who, by furies led, 390  
 The bane of men, abhor'd Chimæra bred ;  
 Skill'd in the dart in vain, his sons expire,  
 And pay the forfeit of their guilty fire.

Stopp'd in the tumult Cleobulus lies,  
 Beneath Oileus' arm, a living prize ; 395  
 A living prize not long the Trojan stood ;  
 The thirsty faulchion drank his reeking blood :  
 Plung'd in his throat the smoaking weapon lies ;  
 Black death, and fate unpitying, seal his eyes.

Amid the ranks, with mutual thirst of fame, 400  
 Lycon the brave, and fierce Peneleus came ;  
 In vain their jav'lines at each other flew,  
 Now, met in arms, their eager swords they drew.  
 On the plum'd crest of his Bæotian foe,  
 The daring Lycon aim'd a noble blow : 405  
 The sword broke short ; but his Peneleus sped  
 Full on the juncture of the neck and head :  
 The head, divided by a stroke so just,  
 Hung by the skin: the body sunk to dust.

v. 390. *Amisodarus, who, etc.*] Amisodarus was king of Caria ; Bellerophon married his daughter. The ancients guessed from this passage that the Chimæra was not a fiction, since Homer marks the time wherein she lived, and the prince with whom she lived ; they thought it was some beast of that prince's herds who being grown furious and mad, had done a great deal of mischief, like the Calydonian boar. Eustathius.

O'ertaken Neamas by Merion bleeds, 410

Pierc'd through the shoulder as he mounts his steeds;

Back from the car he tumbles to the ground:

His swimming eyes eternal shades surround.

Next Erymas was doom'd his fate to feel,

His open'd mouth receiv'd the Cretan steel: 415

Beneath the brain the point a passage tore,

Crash'd the thin bones, and drown'd the teeth in gore:

His mouth, his eyes, his nostrils pour a flood;

He fobs his soul out in the gush of blood.

As when the flocks neglected by the swain 420

(Or kids, or lambs) lie scatter'd o'er the plain,

A troop of wolves th'unguarded charge survey,

And rend the trembling, unresisting prey.

Thus on the foe the Greeks impetuous came:

Troy fled, unmindful of her former fame. 425

But still at Hector godlike Ajax aim'd,

Still, pointed at his breast, his jav'lin flam'd:

The Trojan chief, experienc'd in the field,

O'er his broad shoulders spread the massy shield,

Observ'd the storm of darts the Grecians pour, 430

And on his ringing buckler caught the show'r.

He sees for Greece the scale of conquest rise,

Yet stops, and turns, and saves his lov'd allies.

v. 433. *Yet stops, and turns, and saves his lov'd allies.*] Homer represents Hector, as he retires, making a stand from time to time, to save his troops: and he expresses it by this single word ἀναμίσγει; for ἀναμίσγειν does not signify to *slay*, but likewise in retiring to stop

As when the hand of Jove a tempest forms,  
 And rolls the cloud to blacken heav'n with storms 435  
 Dark o'er the fields th' ascending vapour flies,  
 And shades the sun, and blots the golden skies;  
 So from the ships, along the dusky plain,  
 Dire Flight and Terror drove the Trojan train.  
 Ev'n Hector fled; through heaps of disarray 440  
 The fiery courfers forc'd their lord away:  
 While far behind his Trojans fall confus'd,  
 Wedg'd in the trench, in one vast carnage bruis'd.  
 Chariots on chariots roll; the clashing spokes  
 Shock; while the madding steeds break short their yokes:  
 In vain they labour up the steepy mound; 446  
 Their charioteers lie foaming on the ground.  
 Fierce on the rear, with shouts, Patroclus flies;  
 Tumultuous clamours fills the fields and skies;  
 Thick drifts of dust involve their rapid flight; 450  
 Clouds rise on clouds, and heav'n is snatch'd from sight.  
 Th' affrighted steeds, their dying lords cast down,  
 Scour o'er the fields, and stretch to reach the town.  
 Loud o'er the rout was heard the victor's cry,  
 Where the war bleeds, and where the thickest die, 455  
 Where horse and arms, and chariots lie o'erthrown,  
 And bleeding heroes under axles groan.

from time to time; for this is the power of the proposition *ἀνὰ*, as in the word *ἀναμάχουσαι*, which signifies to fight by fits and starts; *ἀναπαλαίειν*, to wrestle several times, and in many others. Eustathius.

No stop, no check the steeds of Peleus knew ;  
 From bank to bank th' immortal coursers flew.  
 High-bounding o'er the fosse : the whirling car 460  
 Smokes through the ranks, o'ertakes the flying war,  
 And thunders after Hector : Hector flies,  
 Patroclus shakes his lance ; but fate denies.  
 Not with less noise, with less impetuous force,  
 The tide of Trojans urge their desp'rate course, 465  
 Than when in autumn Jove his fury pours,  
 And earth is loaden with incessant show'rs,  
 (When guilty mortals break th' eternal laws,  
 Or judges brib'd, betray the righteous cause)

v. 459. *From bank to bank th' immortal coursers flew, etc.*] Homer had made of Hector's horses all that poetry could make of common and mortal horses ; they stand on the bank of the ditch, foaming and neighing for madness that they cannot leap it. But the immortal horses of Achilles find no obstacle : they leap the ditch, and fly into the plain. Eustathius.

v. 466. *Than when in autumn Jove his fury pours—  
 —When guilty mortals, etc.*]

The poet in this image of an inundation, takes occasion to mention a sentiment of great piety, that such calamities were the effects of divine justice punishing the sins of mankind. This might probably refer to the tradition of an universal deluge, which was very common among the ancient heathen writers ; most of them ascribing the cause of this deluge to the wrath of heaven provoked by the wickedness of men. Diodorus Siculus, l. 15. c. 5. speaking of an earthquake and inundation, which destroyed a great part of Greece, in the hundred and first Olympiad, has these words. *There was a great dispute concerning the cause of this calamity : the natural phi-*



From their deep beds he bids the rivers rise, 470  
 And opens all the flood-gates of the skies:  
 Th' impetuous torrents from their hills obey,  
 Whole fields are drown'd, and mountains swept away;  
 Loud rores the deluge till it meets the main;  
 And trembling man sees all his labours vain. 475

And now the chief (the foremost troops repell'd)  
 Back to the ships his destin'd progress held,  
 Bore down half Troy in his resistless way,  
 And forc'd the routed ranks to stand the day.

*Iosophers generally ascribed such events to necessary causes, not to any divine hand: but they who had more devout sentiments, gave a more probable account hereof: asserting, that it was the divine vengeance alone that brought this destruction upon men who had offended the gods with their impiety. And then proceeds to give an account of those crimes which drew down this punishment upon them.*

This is one, among a thousand instances, of Homer's indirect and oblique manner of introducing moral sentences and instructions. These agreeably break in upon his reader even in descriptions and poetical parts, where one naturally expects only painting and amusement. We have virtue put upon us by surprize, and are pleased to find a thing where we should never have looked to meet with it. I must do a noble English poet the justice to observe, that it is this particular art that is the very distinguishing excellence of Cooper's Hill; throughout which, the description of places, and images raised by the poet, are still tending to some hint, or leading into some reflection, upon moral life or political institution; much in the same manner as the real sight of such scenes and prospects is apt to give the mind a composed turn, and incline it to thoughts and contemplations that have a relation to the object.



Between the space where silver Simois flows,      480

Where lay the fleet, and where the rampires rose,

All grim in dust and blood, Patroclus stands,

And turns the slaughter on the conqu'ring bands.

First Pronous dy'd beneath his fiery dart,

Which pierc'd below his shield his valiant heart.      485

Thestor was next ; who saw the chief appear,

And fell the victim of his coward fear ;

Shrunk up he fate, with wild and haggard eye,

Nor stood to combate, nor had force to fly :

Patroclus mark'd him as he shunn'd the war,      490

And with unmanly tremblings shook the car,

And dropp'd the flowing reins. Him 'twixt the jaws

The jav'lin sticks, and from the chariot draws.

As on a rock that over-hangs the main,

An angler, studious of the line and cane,      495

Some mighty fish draws panting to the shore ;

Not with less ease the barbed jav'lin bore

The gaping dastard : as the spear was shook,

He fell, and life his heartless breast forsook.

v. 480. *Between the space where silver Simois flows,  
Where lay the ships, and where the rampires rose.*]

It looks at first sight as if Patroclus was very punctual in obeying the orders of Achilles, when he hinders the Trojans from ascending to their town, and holds an engagement with them between the ships, the river, and the wall. But he seems afterwards, through very haste, to have slipt his commands, for his orders were that he should drive them from the ships, and then presently return ; but he proceeds farther, and his death is the consequence. Eustathius.

Next on Eryalus he flies; a stone 500  
 Large as a rock, was by his fury thrown;  
 Full on his crown the pond'rous fragment flew  
 And burst the helm, and cleft the head in two:  
 Prone to the ground the breathless warrior fell,  
 And death involv'd him with the shades of hell. 505  
 Then low in dust Epaltes, Echius, lie;  
 Ipheas, Evippus, Polymelus, die;  
 Amphoterus, and Erymas succeed;  
 And last Tlepolemus and Pyres bleed,  
 Where'er he moves, the growing slaughter spread 510  
 In heaps on heaps; a monument of dead.

When now Sarpedon his brave friends beheld  
 Grov'ling in dust, and gasping on the field,

v. 512. *When now Sarpedon, etc.*] The poet preparing to recount the death of Sarpedon, it will not be improper to give a sketch of some particulars which constitute a character the most faultless and amiable in the whole Iliad. This hero is by birth superior to all the chiefs of either side, being the only son of Jupiter engaged in this war. His qualities are no way unworthy his descent, since he every where appears equal in valour, prudence, and eloquence, to the most admired heroes: nor are these excellencies blemished with any of those defects with which the most distinguishing characters of the poem are stained. So that the nicest critics cannot find any thing to offend their delicacy, but must be obliged to own the manners of this hero perfect. His valour is neither rash nor boisterous; his prudence neither timorous nor tricking: and his eloquence neither talkative nor boasting. He never reproaches the living, or insults the dead: but appears uniform through his conduct

With this reproach his flying host he warms,  
 Oh stain to honour ! oh disgrace to arms ! 515  
 Forsake, inglorious, the contended plain ;  
 This hand, unaided, shall the war sustain :  
 The task be mine, this hero's strength to try,  
 Who mows whole troops, and makes an army fly.  
 He spake ; and speaking, leaps from off the car ; 520  
 Patroclus lights, and sternly waits the war.  
 As when two vultures on the mountain's height  
 Stoop with resounding pinions to the fight ;

in the war, acted with the same generous sentiments that engaged him in it, having no interest in the quarrel but to succour his allies in distress. This noble life is ended with a death as glorious ; for in his last moments he has no other concern, but for the honour of his friends, and the event of the day.

Homer justly represents such a character to be attended with universal esteem : as he was greatly honoured when living, he is as much lamented when dead, as the chief prop of Troy. The poet by his death, even before that of Hector, prepares us to expect the destruction of that town, when its two great defenders are no more : and in order to make it the more signal and remarkable, it is the only death of the Iliad attended with prodigies : even his funeral is performed by divine assistance, he being the only hero whose body is carried back to be interred in his native country, and honoured with monuments erected to his fame. These peculiar and distinguishing honours seem appropriated by our author to him alone, as the reward of a merit superior to all his other less perfect heroes.

v. 522. *As when two vultures.*] Homer compares.

They cuff, they tear, they raife a screaming cry :

The desert echoes, and the rocks reply : 525

The warriors thus oppos'd in arms, engage

With equal clamours, and with equal rage.

Jove view'd the combate, whose event foreseen,  
He thus bespoke his fister and his queen.

The hour draws on ; the destinies ordain, 530

My godlike fon shall prefs the Phrygian plain :

Already on the verge of death he ftands,

His life is ow'd to fierce Patroclus' hands.

What paffions in a parent's breaft debate !

Say, fhall I fnatch him from impending fate, 535

Patroclus and Sarpedon to two vultures, becaufe they appeared to be of equal ftrength and abilities, when they had difmounted from their chariots. For this reafon he has chofen to compare them to birds of the fame kind ; as on another occafion, to image the like equality of ftrength, he refembles both Hector and Patroclus to lions : but a little after this place, diminifhing the force of Sarpedon, he compares him to a bull, and Patroclus to a lion. He has placed thefe vultures upon a high rock, becaufe it is their nature to perch there, rather than on the boughs of trees. Their crooked talons make them unfit to walk on the ground, they could not fight fteadily in the air, and therefore their fitteft place is the rock. Eufthathius.

v. 535. *Say, fhall I fnatch him from impending fate.*] It appears by this paffage, that Homer was of opinion, that the power of God could over-rule fate or deftiny. It has puzzled many to diftinguifh exactly the notion of the heathens as to this point. Mr. Dryden contends that Jupiter was limited by the deftinies, or, to ufe his expreffion, was no better than book-keeper to them.

And fend him safe to Lycia, distant far  
From all the dangers and the toils of war;

He grounds it upon a passage in the tenth book of Virgil, where Jupiter mentions this instance of Sarpedon as a proof of his yielding to the fates. But both that, and his citation from Ovid, amounts to no more than that Jupiter gave way to destiny; not that he could not prevent it; the contrary to which is plain from his doubt and deliberation in this place. And indeed whatever may be inferred of other poets, Homer's opinion at least, as to the dispensations of God to man, has ever seemed to me very clear, and distinctly agreeable to truth. We shall find, if we examine his whole works with an eye to this doctrine, that he assigns three causes of all the good and evil that happens in this world, which he takes a particular care to distinguish. First the will of God, superior to all.

——Διος δ' ἐτελείετο βολή. Iliad 1.

——Θεος διὰ πάντα τελευτῶ. Il. 19. ver. 90.

Ζεὺς ἀγαθὸν τε κακὸν τε δίδοι,——etc.

Secondly destiny or fate, meaning the laws and order of nature affecting the constitutions of men, and disposing them to good or evil, prosperity or misfortune; which the supreme being, if it be his pleasure, may over-rule (as he is inclined to do in this place) but which he generally suffers to take effect. Thirdly, our own free-will, which either by prudence overcomes those natural influences and passions, or by folly suffers us to fall under them. Odyss. 1. v. 32.

᾽Ω πόποι, οἷον δὴ νῦν θεὸς βιοτοὶ ἀπίδωνται.

Ἐξ ἡμέων γὰρ φασὶ κακ' ἔμμεναι· οἱ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ  
Σφῆσιν ἀταρταλίσσιν ὑπὲρ μῶρον αλγε' ἔχουσιν.

*Why charge mankind on heav'n their own offence,  
And call their woes the crime of providence?*



Or to his doom my bravest offspring yield,  
And fatten with celestial blood, the field?

Then thus the goddess with the radiant eyes : 540  
What words are these? O sov'reign of the skies !  
Short is the date prescrib'd to mortal man ;  
Shall Jove, for one, extend the narrow span,  
Whose bounds were fix'd before his race began ?  
How many sons of gods, foredoom'd, to death, 545  
Before proud Ilium, must resign their breath !  
Were thine exempt, debate would rise above,  
And murm'ring pow'rs condemn their partial Jove.  
Give the bold chief a glorious fate in fight ;  
And when th'ascending soul has wing'd her flight; 550  
Let Sleep and Death convey, by thy command,  
The breathless body to his native land.

*Blind ! who themselves their miseries create,  
And perish by their folly, not their fate.*

v. 551. *Let Sleep and Death convey, by thy command,  
The breathless body to his native land.*]

The history or fable received in Homer's time, imported, that Sarpedon was interred in Lycia, but it said nothing of his death. This gave the poet the liberty of making him die at Troy, provided that after his death he was carried into Lycia, to preserve the fable. The expedient proposed by Juno solves all; Sarpedon dies at Troy, and is interred at Lycia; and what renders this probable is, that in those times, as at this day, princes and persons of quality who died in foreign parts were carried into their own country to be laid in the tomb with their fathers. The antiquity of this custom cannot be doubted, since it was practised in the patri-



His friends and people, to his future praise,  
 A marble tomb and pyramid shall raise,  
 And lasting honours to his ashes give ; 555  
 His fame, 'tis all the dead can have, shall live.

She said ; the cloud-compeller overcome,  
 Assents to fate, and ratifies the doom.

Then, touch'd with grief, the weeping heav'ns distill'd  
 A show'r of blood o'er all the fatal field ; 560  
 The god, his eyes averting from the plain,  
 Laments his son, predestin'd to be slain,  
 Far from the Lycian shores, his happy native reign. }

Now met in arms, the combatants appear,  
 Each heav'd the shield, and pois'd the lifted spear : 565  
 From strong Patroclus' hand the jav'lin fled,  
 And pass'd the groin of valiant Thrasymed,  
 The nerves unbrac'd, no more his bulk sustain,  
 He falls, and falling bites the bloody plain.  
 Two founding darts the Lycian leader threw ; 570  
 The first aloof with erring fury flew,

archs times: Jacob dying in Ægypt, orders his children  
 to carry him into the land of Canaan, where he desired  
 to be buried. Gen. xlix. 29. Dacier.

v. 560. *A show'r of blood.*] As to showers of a  
 bloody colour, many, both ancient and modern natura-  
 lists, agree in asserting the reality of such appearances,  
 though they account for them differently. You may  
 see a very odd solution of them in Eustathius, Note on  
 v. 70. of the eleventh Iliad. What seems the most  
 probable, is that of Fromondus in his Meteorology, who  
 observed, that a shower of this kind, which gave great  
 cause of wonder, was nothing but a quantity of very

The next transpierc'd Achilles' mortal steed,  
 The gen'rous Pedasus, of Theban breed;  
 Fix'd in the shoulder's joint, he reel'd around;  
 Roll'd in the bloody dust, and paw'd the slipp'ry ground.  
 His sudden fall th' entangled harness broke; 576  
 Each axle crackled, and the chariot shook:  
 When bold Automedon, to disengage  
 The starting coursers, and restrain their rage,  
 Divides the traces with his sword, and freed 580  
 Th' incumber'd chariot from the dying steed:  
 The rest move on, obedient to the rein;  
 The car rolls slowly o'er the dusty plain.

The tow'ring chiefs to fiercer sight advance,  
 And first Sarpedon whirl'd his weighty lance, 585  
 Which o'er the warrior's shoulder took its course,  
 And spent in empty air its dying force.  
 Not so Patroclus' never-erring dart;  
 Aim'd at his breast, it pierc'd the mortal part.  
 Where the strong fibres bind the solid heart. 590

small red insects, beat down to the earth by a heavy shower, whereby the ground was spotted in several places, as with drops of blood.

v. 572. ——— *Achilles mortal steed,*

*The gen'rous Pedasus——]*

For the other two horses of Achilles, Xanthus, and Balaus, were immortal, as we have already seen in this book. It is a merry conceit of Eustathius, that Pedasus is only said to be mortal, because of three horses he only was a gelding. It is pity poor Pedasus had not a better fate to have recompensed the loss of his immortality.

Then, as the mountain oak, or poplar tall,  
Or pine (fit mast for some great admiral)  
Nods to the axe, till with a groaning sound  
It sinks, and spreads its honours on the ground :  
Thus fell the king ; and laid on earth supine, 595  
Before his chariot stretch'd his form divine :  
He grasp'd the dust distain'd with streaming gore,  
And pale in death, lay groaning on the shore.  
So lies a bull beneath the lion's paws,  
While the grim savage grinds with foamy jaws 600  
The trembling limbs, and sucks the smoking blood ;  
Deep groans, and hollow rores, rebellow thro' the wood.  
Then to the leader of the Lycian band  
The dying chief address'd his last command.  
Glaucus, be bold ; thy task be first to dare 605  
The glorious dangers of destructive war,

v. 605. *Glaucus, be bold, etc.*] This dying speech of Sarpedon deserves particular notice, being made up of noble sentiments, and fully answering the character of this brave and generous prince, which he preserves in his last moments. Being sensible of approaching death, without any transports of rage, or desire of revenge, he calls to his friend to take care to preserve his body and arms from becoming a prey to the enemy : and this he says without any regard to himself, but out of the most tender concern for his friend's reputation, who must for ever become infamous, if he fails in this point of honour and duty. If we conceive this said by the expiring hero, his dying looks fixed on his wounded disconsolate friend, the spear remaining in his body, and the victor standing by in a kind of extasy surveying his conquest ; these circumstances will form a very moving

To lead my troops, to combat at their head,

Incite the living, and supply the dead.

Tell them, I charg'd them with my latest breath

Not unreveng'd to bear Sarpedon's death. 610

What grief, what shame must Glaucus undergo,

If these spoil'd arms adorn a Grecian foe ?

Then as a friend, and as a warrior, fight ;

Defend my body, conquer in my right ;

+ That taught by great examples, all may try 615

+ Like thee to vanquish, or like me to die.

He ceas'd ; the fates suppress'd his labouring breath,  
And his eyes darken'd with the shades of death.

Th' insulting victor with disdain bestrode

The prostrate prince, and on his bosom trod ; 620

Then drew the weapon from his panting heart,

The reeking fibres clinging to the dart ;

From the wide wound gush'd out a stream of blood,

And the soul issu'd in the purple flood.

His flying steeds the Myrmidons detain, 625

Unguided now, their mighty master slain.

All-impotent of aid, transfix'd with grief,

Unhappy Glaucus heard the dying chief.

His painful arm, yet useless with the smart

Inflicted late by Teucer's deadly dart, 630

picture. Patroclus all this time, either out of humanity or surprize, omits to pull out the spear, which however he does not long forbear, but with it drawing forth his vitals, puts a period to this gallant life.

Supported

Supported on his better hand he stay'd ;  
To Phœbus then ('twas all he could) he pray'd.

All-seeing monarch ! whether Lycia's coast,  
Or sacred Ilion, thy bright presence boast,  
Pow'rful alike to ease the wretch's smart ; 635  
Oh hear me ! God of ev'ry healing art !  
Lo ! stiff with clotted blood, and pierc'd with pain,  
That thrills my arm, and shoots through ev'ry vein ;  
I stand unable to sustain the spear,  
And sigh, at distance from the glorious war. 640  
Low in the dust is great Sarpedon laid,  
Nor Jove vouchsaf'd his hapless offspring aid.  
But thou, O god of health ! thy succour lend,  
To guard the reliques of my slaughter'd friend.  
For thou, though distant, canst restore my might, 645  
To head my Lycians, and support the fight.

v. 637. ————— *Pierc'd with pain,*

*That thirlls my arm, and shoots thro' ev'ry vein.]*

There seems to be an oversight in this place. Glaucus in the twelfth book had been wounded with an arrow by Teucer at the attack of the wall ; and here so long after, we find him still on the field, *in the sharpest anguish of his wound, the blood not being yet stanch'd*, etc. In the speech that next follows to Hector, there is also something liable to censure, when he imputes to the negligence of the Trojans the death of Sarpedon, of which they knew nothing till that very speech informed them. I beg leave to pass over these things without exposing or defending them ; though such as these may be sufficient grounds for a most inveterate war among the critics.



Apollo heard ; and suppliant as he stood,  
His heav'nly hand restrain'd the flux of blood ;  
He drew the dolours from the wounded part,  
And breath'd a spirit in his rising heart. 650  
Renew'd, by art divine, the hero stands,  
And owns th' assistance of immortal hands.  
First to the fight his native troops he warms,  
Then loudly calls on Troy's vindictive arms ;  
With ample strides he stalks from place to place ; 655  
Now fires Agenor, now Polydamas ;  
Æneas next, and Hector he accosts ;  
Inflaming thus the rage of all their hosts.

What thoughts, regardless chief ! thy breast employ ?  
Oh too forgetful of the friends of Troy ! 660  
Those gen'rous friends, who, from their country far,  
Breathe their brave souls out in another's war.  
See ! where in dust the great Sarpedon lies,  
In action valiant, and in council wise,  
Who guarded right, and kept his people free ; 665  
To all his Lycians lost, and lost to thee ;  
Stretch'd by Patroclus' arm on yonder plains,  
Oh save from hostile rage his lov'd remains :  
Ah let not Greece his conquer'd trophies boast,  
Nor on his corse revenge her heroes lost, 670

He spoke ; each leader in his grief partook  
Troy, at the loss, through all her legions shook.  
Transfix'd with deep regret, they view o'erthrown  
At once his country's pillar, and their own ;



Book XVI.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      243

A chief who led to Troy's beleagur'd wall      675

A host of heroes, and out-shin'd them all.

Fir'd, they rush on ; first Hector seeks the foes,

And with superior vengeance, greatly glows.

But o'er the dead the fierce Patroclus stands,  
And rousing Ajax, rous'd the list'ning bands.      680

Heroes, be men ! be what you were before :

Or weigh the great occasion, and be more.

The chief who taught our lofty walls to yield,

Lies pale in death, extended on the field.

To guard his body Troy in numbers flies ;      685

'Tis half the glory to maintain our prize.

Haste, strip his arms, the slaughter round him spread,

And send the living Lycians to the dead.

The heroes kindle at his fierce command ;  
The martial squadrons close on either hand :      690

Here Troy and Lycia charge with loud alarms,

Theffalia there, and Greece, oppose their arms.

With horrid shouts they circle round the slain ;

The clash of armour rings o'er all the plain.

Great Jove, to swell the horrors of the fight,      695

O'er the fierce armies pours pernicious Night,

v. 696. *Great Jove*—————

*O'er the fierce armies pours pernicious Night.]*

Homer calls here by the name of Night, the whirlwinds of thick dust which rise from beneath the feet of the combatants, and which hinder them from knowing one another. Thus poetry knows how to convert the most natural things into miracles; these two armies are bu-

And round his son confounds the warring hosts,  
His fate ennobling with a croud of ghosts.

Now Greece gives way, and great Epigeus falls;  
Agacleus' son, from Budium's lofty walls; 700  
Who chas'd for murder thence, a suppliant came  
To Peleus and the silver-footed dame;  
Now sent to Troy, Achilles' arms to aid,  
He pays due vengeance to his kinsman's shade.  
Soon as his luckless hand had touch'd the dead, 705  
A rock's large fragment thunder'd on his head;  
Hurl'd by Hectorean force, it cleft in twain  
His shatter'd helm, and stretch'd him o'er the slain.

Fierce to the van of fight Patroclus came;  
And, like an eagle darting at his game, 710  
Sprung on the Trojan and the Lycian band;  
What grief thy heart, what fury urg'd thy hand,  
Oh gen'rous Greek! when with full vigour thrown  
At Sthenelaus flew the weighty stone,  
Which sunk him to the dead: when Troy, too near  
That arm, drew back; and Hector learn'd to fear. 716  
Far as an able hand a lance can throw,  
Or at the lists, or at the fighting foe;  
So far the Trojans from their lines retir'd;  
'Till Glaucus turning, all the rest inspir'd. 720

ried in dust round Sarpedon's body; it is Jupiter who pours upon them an obscure night, to make the battle bloodier, and to honour the funeral of his son by a greater number of victims. Eustathius.

Then Bathyclæus fell beneath his rage,  
 The only hope of Chalcon's trembling age :  
 Wide o'er the land was stretch'd his large domain,  
 With stately seats, and riches blest, in vain :  
 Him, bold with youth, and eager to pursue 725  
 The flying Lycians, Glaucus met, and slew ;  
 Pierc'd through the bosom with a sudden wound,  
 He fell, and falling, made the fields resound.  
 Th'Achaïans sorrow for their hero slain ;  
 With conqu'ring shouts the Trojans shake the plain,  
 And croud to spoil the dead : the Greeks oppose ; 731  
 An iron circle round the carcase grows.

Then brave Laogonus resign'd his breath,  
 Dispatch'd by Merion to the shades of death :  
 On Ida's holy hill he made abode, 735  
 The priest of Jove, and honour'd like his god.  
 Between the jaw and ear the jav'lin went ;  
 The soul, exhaling, issu'd at the vent.  
 His spear Æneas at the victor threw,  
 Who stooping forward from the death withdrew ; 740  
 The lance hiss'd harmless o'er his cov'ring shield,  
 And trembling strook, and rooted in the field ;  
 There yet scarce spent, it quivers on the plain,  
 Sent by the great Æneas arm in vain.  
 Swift as thou art, the raging hero cries, 745  
 And skill'd in dancing to dispute the prize,

. v. 746. *And skill'd in dancing.*] This stroke of raille-  
 ry upon Meriones is founded on the custom of his coun-

My spear, the destin'd passage had it found,  
Had fix'd thy active vigour to the ground.

Oh valiant leader of the Dardan host !

(Insulted Merion thus retorts the boast) 750

Strong as you are, 'tis mortal force you trust,  
An arm as strong may stretch thee in the dust.  
And if to this my lance thy fate be giv'n,  
Vain are thy vaunts ; success is still from heav'n ;  
This instant sends thee down to Pluto's coast, 755  
Mine is the glory, his thy parting ghost.

O friend, Menœtius' son this answer gave,

With words to combat, ill befits the brave ;  
Not empty boasts the sons of Troy repell,  
Your swords must plunge them to the shades of hell.  
To speak, beseems the council ; but to dare 761  
In glorious action, is the task of war.

This said, Patroclus to the battle flies ;

Great Merion follows, and new shouts arise :  
Shields, helmets rattle, as the warriors close ; 765  
And thick and heavy sounds the storm of blows.  
As through the shrilling vale, or mountain ground,  
The labours of the woodman's axe resound ;  
Blows following blows are heard re-echoing wide,  
While crackling forests fall on every side : 770

try. For the Cretans were particularly addicted to this exercise, and in particular are said to have invented the Pyrrhic dance, which was performed in complete armour. See note on v. 797. in the 13th book.

Thus echo'd all the fields with loud alarms,  
So fell the warriors, and so rung their arms.

Now great Sarpedon, on the sandy shore,  
His heav'nly form defac'd with dust and gore,  
And stuck with darts by warring heroes shed, 775  
Lies undistinguish'd from the vulgar dead.

His long disputed corse the chiefs inclose,  
On ev'ry side the busy combate grows;  
Thick as beneath some shepherd's thatch'd abode,  
(The pails high-foaming with a milky flood) 780

The buzzing flies, a persevering train,  
Incessant swarm, and chas'd return again.

Jove view'd the combate with a stern survey,  
And eyes that flash'd intolerable day;  
Fix'd on the field his sight, his breast debates 785

The vengeance due, and meditates the fates;  
Whether to urge their prompt effect, and call  
The force of Hector to Patroclus' fall,  
This instant see his short-liv'd trophies won,  
And stretch him breathless on his slaughter'd son; 790

Or yet, with many a soul's untimely flight,  
Augment the fame and horror of the fight,  
To crown Achilles' valiant friend with praise  
At length he dooms; and that his last of days  
Shall set in glory; bids him drive the foe; 795

Nor unattended, see the shades below.  
Then Hector's mind he fills with dire dismay;  
He mounts his car, and calls his hosts away,

Sunk with Troy's heavy fates, he sees decline

The scales of Jove, and pants with awe divine. 800

Then, nor before, the hardy Lycians fled,  
And left their monarch with the common dead :

Around, in heaps on heaps, a dreadful wall  
Of carnage rises, as the heroes fall.

(So Jove decree'd !) at length the Greeks obtain 805

The prize contested, and despoil the slain.

The radiant arms are by Patroclus borne,  
Patroclus' ships the glorious spoils adorn.

Then thus to Phœbus, in the realms above,  
Spoke from his throne the cloud-compelling Jove. 810

Descend, my Phœbus ! on the Phrygian plain,

And from the fight convey Sarpedon slain ;

Then bathe his body in the crystal flood,

With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with blood :

O'er all his limbs ambrosial odours shed, 815

And with celestial robes adorn the dead.

Those rites discharg'd, his sacred corse bequeath

To the soft arms of silent Sleep and Death :

They to his friends the mournful charge shall bear,

His friends a tomb and pyramid shall rear ; 820

What honours mortals after death receive,

Those unavailing honours we may give !

Apollo bows, and from mount Ida's height,

Swift to the field precipitates his flight ;

Thence from the war the breathless hero bore, 825

Veil'd in a cloud, to silver Simois' shore ;



There bath'd his honourable wounds, and drest  
 His manly members in th' immortal vest;  
 And with perfumes of sweet ambrosial dews,  
 Restores his freshness, and his form renews. 830  
 Then Sleep and Death, two twins of winged race,  
 Of matchless swiftness, but of silent pace,

v. 831. *Then Sleep and Death, etc.*] It is the notion of Eustathius, that by this interment of Sarpedon, where Sleep and Death are concerned, Homer seems to intimate, that there was nothing else but an empty monument of that hero in Lycia; for he delivers him not to any real or solid persons, but to certain unsubstantial phantoms to conduct his body thither. He was forced, continues my author, to make use of these machines, since there were no other deities he could with any likelihood employ about this work; for the ancients, (as appears from Euripides, Hyppolyto,) had a superstition that all dead bodies were offensive to the gods, they being of a nature celestial and uncorruptible. But this last remark is impertinent, since we see, in this very place, Apollo is employed in adorning and embalming the body of Sarpedon.

What I think better accounts for the passage, is what Philostratus in Heroicis affirms, that this alludes to a piece of antiquity. "The Lycians shewed the body of Sarpedon, strewed over with aromatical spices, in such a graceful composure, that he seemed to be only asleep: and it was this that gave rise to the fiction of Homer, that his rites were performed by Sleep and Death."

But after all these refined observations, it is probable the poet intended only to represent the death of this favourite son of Jupiter, and one of his most amiable character, in a gentle and agreeable view, without any circumstances of dread or horror; intimating, by this fic-

Receiv'd Sarpedon, and the god's command,  
 And in a moment reach'd the Lycian land ;  
 The corse amidst his weeping friends they laid, 835  
 Where endless honours wait the sacred shade.

Meanwhile Patroclus pours along the plains,  
 With foaming courfers, and with loosen'd reins.  
 Fierce on the Trojan and the Lycian crew,  
 Ah blind to fate ! thy headlong fury flew : 840  
 Against what fate and pow'rful Jove ordain,  
 Vain was thy friend's command, thy courage vain.  
 For he, the god, whose counsels uncontroll'd  
 Dismay the mighty, and confound the bold ;  
 The god who gives, resumes, and orders all, 845  
 He urg'd thee on, and urg'd thee on to fall.

Who first, brave hero ! by that arm was slain,  
 Who last, beneath thy vengeance press'd the plain ;

tion, that he was delivered out of all the tumults and miseries of life by two imaginary deities, Sleep and Death, who alone can give mankind ease and exemption from their misfortunes.

v. 847. *Who first, brave hero, etc.*] The poet in a very moving and solemn way turns his discourse to Patroclus. He does not accost his muse, as it is usual with him to do, but enquires of the hero himself who was the first, and who the last, who fell by his hand ? This address distinguishes and signalizes Patroclus, (to whom Homer uses it more frequently, than I remember on any other occasion) as if he was some genius or divine being, and at the same time it is very pathetical, and apt to move our compassion. The same kind of apostrophe is used by Virgil to Camilla.

When heav'n itself thy fatal fury led,  
And call'd to fill the number of the dead? 850  
Adrestus first; Autonous then succeeds;  
Echeclus follows; next young Megas bleeds;  
Epistor, Menalippus, bite the ground;  
The slaughter, Elafus and Mulius crown'd:  
Then sunk Pylartes to eternal night; 855  
The rest dispersing, trust their fates to flight.

Now Troy had stoop'd beneath his matchless pow'r,  
But flaming Phœbus kept the sacred tow'r.  
Thrice at the battlements Patroclus strook,  
His blazing Ægis thrice Apollo shook: 860  
He try'd the fourth; when, bursting from the cloud,  
A more than mortal voice was heard aloud.

Patroclus! cease; This heav'n-defended wall  
Defies thy lance; not fated yet to fall:  
Thy friend, thy greater far, it shall withstand, 865  
Troy shall not stoop ev'n to Achilles' hand.  
So spoke the god, who darts celestial fires:  
The Greek obeys him, and with awe retires.  
While Hector checking at the Scæan gates,  
His panting courfers, in his breast debates, 870  
Or in the field his forces to employ,  
Or draw the troops within the walls of Troy.  
Thus while he thought, beside him Phœbus stood,  
In Asius' shape, who reign'd by Sangar's flood;

*Quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera virgo?  
Dejicis? Aut quot huius morientia corpora fundis?*

(Thy brother, Hecuba ! from Dymas sprung, 875  
A valiant warrior, haughty, bold, and young.)  
Thus he accosts him. What a shameful fight !  
Gods ! is it Hector that forbears the fight ?  
Were thine my vigour this successful spear  
Should soon convince thee of so false a fear. 880  
Turn then, ah turn thee to the field of fame,  
And in Patroclus' blood efface thy shame.  
Perhaps Apollo shall thy arms succeed,  
And heav'n ordains him by thy lance to bleed.  
So spoke th' inspiring god ; then took his flight, 885  
And plung'd amidst the tumult of the fight.  
He bids Cebrión drive the rapid car ;  
The lash resounds, the coursers rush to war.  
The god the Grecians sinking souls deprest,  
And pour'd swift spirits through each Trojan breast.  
Patroclus lights, impatient for the fight ; 891  
A spear his left, a stone employs his right :  
With all his nerves he drives it at the foe ;  
Pointed above, and rough and gross below :  
The falling ruin crush'd Cebrión's head, 895  
(The lawless offspring of king Priam's bed,)  
His front, brows, eyes, one undistinguish'd wound,  
The bursting balls drop sightless to the ground.  
The charioteer, while yet he held the rein,  
Struck from the car, falls headlong on the plain. 900  
To the dark shades the soul unwilling glides,  
While the proud victor thus his fall derides.

Good heav'ns ! what active feats yon' artist shows,  
What skilful divers are our Phrygian foes !

v. 904. *What skilful divers, etc.*] The original is literally thus : *It is pity he is not nearer the sea, he would furnish good quantities of excellent oysters, and the storms would not frighten him ; see how he exercises and plunges from the top of his chariot into the plain ! Who would think that there were such good divers at Troy ?* This seems to be a little too long ; and if this passage be really Homer's, I could almost swear that he intended to let us know, that a good soldier may be an indifferent jester. But I very much doubt whether this passage be his : it is very likely those last five verses were added by some of the ancient critics, whose caprices Homer has frequently undergone : or perhaps some of the rhapsodists, who, in reciting his verses, made additions of their own to please their auditors. And what persuades me of its being so, is, that it is by no means probable that Patroclus, who had lately blamed Meriones for his little raillery against Æneas, and told him, " that it was not by raillery or invective that they were " to repel the Trojans, but by dint of blows ; that council required words, but war deeds : " it is by no means probable, I say, that the same Patroclus should forget that excellent precept, and amuse himself with raillery, especially in the sight of Hector. I am therefore of opinion that Patroclus said no more than this verse, *ὦ πόποι, etc.* *Good gods ! what an active Trojan it is, and how cleverly he dives !* and that the five following are strangers, though very ancient. Dacier.

I must just take notice, that however mean or ill-placed these railleries may appear, there have not been wanting such fond lovers of Homer as have admired and imitated them. Milton himself is of this number, as may be seen from those very low jests, which he has

Mark with what ease they sink into the sand! 905

Pity! that all their practice is by land.

Then rushing sudden on his prostrate prize,  
To spoil the carcase fierce Patroclus flies;

Swift as a lion, terrible and bold,

That sweeps the fields, depopulates the fold; 910

Pierc'd through the dauntless heart, then tumbles slain;  
And from his fatal courage finds his bane.

At once bold Hector leaping from his car,

Defends the body, and provokes the war.

Thus for some slaughter'd hind, with equal rage, 915

Two lordly rulers of the wood engage;

Stung with fierce hunger, each the prey invades,

And echoing rores rebellow through the shades.

put into the mouth of Satan and his angels in the sixth book. What Æneas says to Meriones upon his dancing, is nothing so trivial as those lines; where, after the displotion of their diabolical enginry, angel rolling on archangel, they are thus derided.

—————*When we propounded terms*

*Of composition, strait they chang'd their minds,*

*Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,*

*As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem'd*

*Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps*

*For joy of offer'd peace—————etc.*

—————*Terms that amus'd them all,*

*And stumbled many; who receives them right*

*Had need from head to foot well understand:*

*Nor understood, this gift they have besides,*

*They shew us when our foes walk not upright.*



Stern Hector fastens on the warrior's head,  
And by the foot Patroclus drags the dead. 920

While all around, confusion, rage, and fright  
Mix the contending hosts in mortal fight.  
So pent by hills, the wild winds rore aloud  
In the deep bosom of some gloomy wood ;  
Leaves, arms, and trees aloft in air are blown, 925

The broad oaks crackle, and the Sylvans groan ;  
This way and that, the ratt'ling thicket bends,  
And the whole forest in one crash descends.  
Not with less noise, with less tumultuous rage,  
In dreadful shock the mingled hosts engage, 930

Darts show'r'd on darts, now round the carcase ring ;  
Now flights of arrows bounding from the string :  
Stones follow stones, some clatter on the fields,  
Some hard, and heavy, shake the founding shields ;  
But where the rising whirlwind clouds the plains,  
Sunk in soft dust the mighty chief remains, }  
And stretch'd in death, forgets the guiding reins ! }

Now flaming from the Zenith, Sol had driv'n  
His fervid orb through half the vault of heav'n ;  
While on each host with equal tempest fell 940  
The show'ring darts, and numbers sunk to hell.  
But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,  
Glad conquest rested on the Grecian train.

Then from amidst the tumult and alarms,  
They draw the conquer'd corse, and radiant arms. 945  
Then rash Patroclus with new fury glows,  
And breathing slaughter, pours amid the foes.

Thrice on the prefs like Mars himself he flew,  
And thrice three heroes at each onset flew.

There ends thy glory ! there the fates untwine 950

The last, black remnant of so bright a line ;

Apollo dreadful stops thy middle way ;

Death calls, and heav'n allows no longer day !

For lo ! the god in dusky clouds enshrin'd,  
Approaching dealt a staggyring blow behind. 955

The weighty shock his neck and shoulders feel ;

His eyes flash sparkles, his stunn'd senses reel

In giddy darkness : far to distance flung,

His bounding helmet on the champain rung.

Achilles' plume is stain'd with dust and gore ; 960

That plume, which never stoop'd to earth before,

Long us'd, untouch'd, in fighting fields to shine,

And shed the temples of the man divine.

Jove dooms it now on Hector's helm to nod ;

Not long——for fate pursues him, and the god. 965

His spear in shivers falls : his ample shield

Drops from his arm : his baldrick strows the field :

v. 952. *Apollo dreadful, etc.*] If Homer is resolved to do any thing extraordinary, or arbitrary, which his readers may not very well relish, he takes care however to prepare them by degrees for receiving such innovations. He had before given us a sketch of this trick of the gods in the thirteenth book, where Neptune serves Alcathous much in the same manner. Apollo here carries it a little farther ; and both these are specimens of what we are to expect from Minerva at the death of Hector in Iliad 22.

The corselet his astonish'd breast forsakes :

Loose is each joint ; each nerve with horror shakes.

Stupid he stares, and all-assistless stands : 970

Such is the force of more than mortal hands !

A Dardan youth there was, well known to fame,

From Panthus sprung, Euphorbus was his name :

Fam'd for the manage of the foaming horse,

Skill'd in the dart, and matchless in the course, 975

Full twenty knights he tumbled from the car,

While yet he learn'd his rudiments of war.

His vent'rous spear first drew the hero's gore :

He strook, he wounded, but he durst no more ;

Nor though disarm'd, Patroclus' fury stood : 980

But swift withdrew the long-protended wood, .

And turn'd him short, and herded in the croud.

Thus, by an arm divine, and mortal spear,

Wounded at once, Patroclus yields to fear, .

Retires for succour to his social train, 985

And flies the fate, which heav'n decreed, in vain.

Stern Hector, as the bleeding chief he views,

Breaks through the ranks, and his retreat pursues :

The lance arrests him with a mortal wound ;

He falls, earth thunders, and his arms resound. 990

With him all Greece was sunk ; that moment all

Her yet-surviving heroes seem'd to fall.

So scorch'd with heat, along the desert shore,

The roaming lion meets a bristly boar,

Fast by the spring ; they both dispute the flood, 995  
 With flaming eyes, and jaws besmear'd with blood ;  
 At length the sov'reign savage wins the strife,  
 And the torn boar resigns his thirst and life.  
 Patroclus thus, so many chiefs o'erthrown,  
 So many lives effus'd, expires his own. 1000

As dying now at Hector's feet he lies,  
 He sternly views him, and triumphing cries :

Lie there, Patroclus ! and with thee, the joy  
 Thy pride once promis'd, of subverting Troy ;  
 The fancied scenes of Ilion wrapt in flames, 1005  
 And thy soft pleasures serv'd with captive dames !  
 Unthinking man ! I fought, those tow'rs to free,  
 And guard that beauteous race from lords like thee :  
 But thou a prey to vultures shalt be made ;  
 Thy own Achilles cannot lend thee aid ; 1010  
 Though much at parting that great chief might say,  
 And much enjoin thee, this important day.

“ Return not, my brave friend, perhaps he said,

“ Without the bloody arms of Hector dead.

He spoke, Patroclus march'd, and thus he sped.

v. 1003. *Lie there, Patroclus !* etc.] There is much spirit in this sarcasm of Hector upon Patroclus : nor is Achilles exempt from the severity of the reflection, who, as he imagines, had persuaded his dearest friend to attempt exploits that were impracticable. He touches him also, for staying at home in security himself, and encouraging Patroclus to undertake this perilous adventure, and to seek after spoils which he was never like to enjoy. Eustathius,

Supine, and wildly gazing on the skies, 1016  
With faint, expiring breath, the chief replies.

Vain boaster ! cease, and know the pow'rs divine ;  
Jove's and Apollo's is this deed, not thine ;  
To heav'n is ow'd whate'er your own you call, 1020  
And heav'n itself disarm'd me ere my fall.  
Had twenty mortals each thy match in might,  
Oppos'd me fairly, they had sunk in fight :  
By fate and Phœbus was I first o'erthrown,  
Euphorbus next ; the third mean part thy own. 1025  
But thou, imperious ! hear my latest breath ;  
The gods inspire it, and it sounds thy death.  
Insulting man, thou shalt be soon, as I ;  
Black fate hangs o'er thee, and thy hour draws nigh ;

v. 1026. — *Hear my latest breath,  
The gods inspire it —*]

It is an opinion of great antiquity, that when the soul is on the point of being delivered from the body, and makes a nearer approach to the divine nature, at such a time its views are stronger and clearer, and the mind endowed with a spirit of true prediction. So Artemon of Miletum says in his book of dreams, that when the soul hath collected all its powers from every limb and part of the body, and is just ready to be severed from it, at that time it becomes prophetic. Socrates also in his defence to the Athenians, “ I am now arrived at the verge of life, wherein it is familiar with people to fore-tell what will come to pass.” Eustathius.

This opinion seems alluded to in those admirable lines of Waller :

*Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,  
Who stand upon the threshold of the new.*

Ev'n now on life's last verge I see thee stand, 1030  
I see thee fall, and by Achilles' hand.

He faints ; the soul unwilling wings her way,  
(The beauteous body left a load of clay)

v. 1032. *The death of Patroclus,*] I sometimes think I am in respect to Homer much like Sancho Panca with regard to Don Quixote. I believe upon the whole that no mortal ever came near him for wisdom, learning, and all good qualities. But sometimes there are certain starts which I cannot tell what to make of, and am forced to own that my master is a little out of the way, if not quite beside himself. The present passage of the death of Patroclus, attended with so many odd circumstances to overthrow this hero, (who might, for all I can see, as decently have fallen by the force of Hector) are what I am at a loss to excuse, and must indeed, in my own opinion, give them up to the critics. I really think almost all those parts in Homer which have been objected against with most clamour and fury, are honestly defensible, and none of them, to confess my private sentiment, seem to me to be faults of any consideration, except this conduct in the death of Patroclus, the length of Nestor's discourse in lib. 11. the speech of Achilles's horse in the 19. the conversation of that hero with Æneas in lib. 20. and the manner of Hector's flight round the walls of Troy. lib. 22. I hope, after so free a confession, no reasonable modern will think me touched with the *ὀμνηρομανία* of madam Dacier and others. I am sensible of the extremes which mankind run into, in extolling and depreciating authors : we are not more violent and unreasonable in attacking those who are not yet established in fame, than in defending those who are, even in every minute trifle. Fame is a debt, which when we have kept from people as long as we can, we pay with a prodigious interest, which amounts to twice the value of the principal. Thus it is with ancient works as



Flits to the lone, uncomfortable coast ;

A naked, wand'ring, melancholy ghost !

1035

with ancient coins, they pass for a vast deal more than they were worth at first ; and the very obscurities and deformities which time has thrown upon them, are the sacred rust, which enhances their value with all true lovers of antiquity.

But as I have owned what seem my authors faults, and subscribed to the opinion of Horace, that Homer sometimes nods ; I think I ought to add that of Longinus as to such negligences. I can no way so well conclude the notes of this book as with the translation of it.

“ I may not be improper to discuss the question in  
“ general, which of the two is the more estimable, a  
“ faulty sublime, or a faultless mediocrity ? And con-  
“ sequently, if of two works, one has the greater num-  
“ ber of beauties, and the other attains directly to the  
“ sublime, which of these shall in equity carry the  
“ prize ? I am really persuaded that the true sublime  
“ is incapable of that purity which we find in the com-  
“ positions of a lower strain, and in effect, that too  
“ much accuracy sinks the spirit of an author ; where-  
“ as the case is generally the same with the favourites  
“ of nature, and those of fortune, who, with the best  
“ œconomy cannot, in the great abundance they are blest  
“ with, attend to the minuter articles of their expence.  
“ Writers of a cool imagination are cautious in their  
“ management, and venture nothing, merely to gain  
“ the character of being correct ; but the sublime is  
“ bold and enterprizing, notwithstanding that on every  
“ advance the danger increaseth. Here probably some  
“ will say that men take a malicious satisfaction in ex-  
“ posing the blemishes of an author ; that his errors are  
“ never forgot, while the most exquisite beauties leave  
“ but very imperfect traces on the memory. To ob-  
“ viate this objection, I will solemnly declare, that in

Then Hector, pausing, as his eyes he fed  
On the pale carcase, then address'd the dead:

“ my criticisms of Homer and other authors, who are  
“ universally allowed to be authentic standards of the  
“ sublime, though I have censured their failings with  
“ as much freedom as any one, yet I have not presum-  
“ ed to accuse them of voluntary faults, but have gently  
“ remarked some little defects and negligences, which  
“ the mind, being intent on nobler ideas, did not con-  
“ descend to regard. And on these principles I will  
“ venture to lay it down for a maxim, that the sublime,  
“ purely on account of its grandeur, is preferable to all  
“ other kinds of stile, however it may fall into some  
“ inequalities. The Argonautics of Appollonius are  
“ faultless in their kind; and Theocritus hath shewn  
“ the happiest vein imaginable for pastorals, excepting  
“ those in which he has deviated from the country;  
“ and yet if it were put to your choice, would you  
“ have your name descend to posterity with the reputa-  
“ tion of either of those poets, rather than with that  
“ of Homer? Nothing can be more correct than the  
“ Erigone of Eratosthenes: but is he therefore a great-  
“ er poet than Archilochus, in whose compositions per-  
“ spicuity and order are often wanting; the divine fu-  
“ ry of his genius being too impatient for restraint, and  
“ superior to law? Again, do you prefer the odes of  
“ Bacchilides to Pindar's, or the scenes of Ion of Chios  
“ to those of Sophocles? Their writings are allowed  
“ to be correct, polite and delicate; whereas, on the  
“ other hand, Pindar and Sophocles sometimes hurry  
“ on with the greatest impetuosity, and, like a devour-  
“ ing flame, seize and set on fire whatever comes in  
“ their way; but, on a sudden, the conflagration is ex-  
“ tinguished, and they miserably flag when no-body  
“ expects it. Yet none have so little discernment, as

From whence this boding speech, the stern decree  
Of death denounc'd, or why denounc'd to me ?

Why not as well Achilles' fate be giv'n      1040  
To Hector's lance ? Who knows the will of heav'n ?

Penfive he said ; then pressing as he lay  
His breathless bosom, tore the lance away ;

“ not to prefer the single Oedipus of Sophocles to all the  
“ tragedies that Ion ever brought on the stage.

“ In our decisions therefore on the characters of these  
“ great men, who have illustrated what is useful and ne-  
“ cessary with all the graces and elevation of stile ; we  
“ must impartially confess that, with all their errors, they  
“ have more perfections than the nature of man can al-  
“ most be conceived capable of attaining : for it is mere-  
“ ly human to excel in other kinds of writing, but the  
“ sublime enobleth our nature, and makes near approach-  
“ es to the divinity : he who commits no faults, is bare-  
“ ly read without censure ; but a genius truly great ex-  
“ cites admiration. In short, the magnificence of a single  
“ period in one of these admirable authors, is sufficient  
“ to atone for all their defects : nay, farther, if any one  
“ should collect from Homer, Demosthenes, Plato, and  
“ other celebrated heroes of antiquity, the little errors  
“ that have escaped them ; they would not bear the least  
“ proportion to the infinite beauties to be met with in e-  
“ very page of their writings. It is on this account that  
“ envy, through so many ages, hath never been able to  
“ wrest from them the prize of eloquence which their  
“ merits have so justly acquired : an acquisition which  
“ they still are, and will in all probability continue pos-  
“ sessed of,

“ *As long as streams in silver mazes rove,*

“ *Or spring with annual green renew the grove.*”

Mr. Fenton.

And upwards cast the corps : the reeking spear

He shakes, and charges the bold charioteer.

1045

But swift Autemedon with loosen'd reins

Rapt in the chariot o'er the distant plains,

Far from his rage th' immortal coursers drove ;

Th' immortal coursers were the gift of Jove.

T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K XVII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The seventh battle, for the body of Patroclus: the acts of Menelaus.

*MENE LAUS, upon the death of Patroclus, defends his body from the enemy: Euphorbus, who attempts it, is slain. Hector advancing, Menelaus retires: but soon returns with Ajax, and drives him off. This Glaucus objects to Hector as a flight, who thereupon puts on the armour he had won from Patroclus, and renews the battle. The Greeks give way, till Ajax rallies them: Æneas sustains the Trojans. Æneas and Hector attempt the chariot of Achilles, which is borne off by Automedon. The horses of Achilles deplore the death of Patroclus: Jupiter covers his body with a thick darkness: the noble prayer of Ajax on that occasion. Menelaus sends Antilochus to Achilles, with the news of Patroclus' death: then returns to the fight, where, tho' attacked with the utmost fury, he and Meriones assisted by the Ajaxes, bear off the body to the ships.*

The time is the evening of the eight and twentieth day.

The scene lies in the fields before Troy.

**O**N the cold earth divine Patroclus spread,  
Lies pierc'd with wounds among the vulgar dead.

This is the only book of the Iliad which is a continued description of a battle, without any digression or

Great Menelaus, touch'd with gen'rous woe,  
Ssprings to the front, and guards him from the foe :

episode, that serves for an interval to refresh the reader. The heavenly machines too are fewer than in any other. Homer seems to have trusted wholly to the force of his own genius, as sufficient to support him, whatsoever lengths he was carried by it. But that spirit which animates the original, is what I am sensible evaporates so much in my hands ; that, though I cannot think my author tedious, I should have made him seem so, if I had not translated this book with all possible conciseness. I hope there is nothing material omitted, though the version consists but of sixty-five lines more than the original.

However, one may observe there are more turns of fortune, more defeats, more rallyings, more accidents, in this battle, than in any other ; because it was to be the last wherein the Greeks and Trojans were upon equal terms before the return of Achilles : and besides, all this serves to introduce the chief hero with the greater pomp and dignity.

v. 3. *Great Menelaus* ———] The poet here takes occasion to clear Menelaus from the imputations of idle and effeminate, cast on him in some parts of the poem ; he sets him in the front of the army, exposing himself to dangers in defending the body of Patroclus, and gives him the conquest of Euphorbus, who had the first hand in his death. He is represented as the foremost who appears in his defence, not only as one of a like disposition of mind with Patroclus, a kind and generous friend ; but as being more immediately concerned in honour to protect from injuries the body of a hero that fell in his cause. Eustathius. See the note on v. 271. of the 3d book.



Thus round her new-fall'n young, the heifer moves, 5  
Fruit of her throes, and first-born of her loves,

v. 5. *Thus round her new-fall'n young, etc.*] In this comparison, as Eustathius has very well observed, the poet accommodating himself to the occasion, means only to describe the affection Menelaus had for Patroclus, and the manner in which he presented himself to defend his body : and this comparison is so much the more just and agreeable, as Menelaus was a prince full of goodness and mildness. He must have little sense or knowledge in poetry, who thinks that it ought to be suppressed. It is true, we should not use it now-a-days, by reason of the low ideas we have of the animals from which it is derived ; but those not being the ideas of Homer's time, they could not hinder him from making a proper use of such a comparison. Dacier.

v. idem. *Thus round her new-fall'n young, etc.*] It seems to me remarkable, that the several comparisons to illustrate the concern for Patroclus are taken from the most tender sentiments of nature. Achilles, in the beginning of the sixteenth book, considers him as a child, and himself as his mother. The sorrow of Menelaus is here described as that of a heifer for her young one. Perhaps these are designed to intimate the excellent temper and goodness of Patroclus, which is expressed in that fine elogy of him in this book. v. 671.

Πᾶσιν γὰρ ἐπίστατο μέλιχος εἶναι,

*He knew how to be good-natured to all men.* This gave all mankind these sentiments for him, and no doubt the same is strongly pointed at by the uncommon concern of the whole army to rescue his body.

The dissimilitude of manners between these two friends, Achilles and Patroclus, is very observable ; such friendships are not uncommon, and I have often

And anxious, (helpless as he lies, and bare)

Turns, and re-turns her, with a mother's care.

Oppos'd to each that near the carcase came,

His broad shield glimmers, and his lances flame. 10

The son of Panthus skill'd the dart to send,

Eyes the dead hero, and insults the friend.

This hand, Atrides, laid Patroclus low ;

Warrior ! desist, nor tempt an equal blow :

assigned this reason for them, that it is natural for men to seek the assistance of those qualities in others which they want themselves. That is still better if applied to providence, which associates men of different and contrary qualities, in order to make a more perfect system. But, whatever is customary in nature, Homer had a good poetical reason for it ; for it affords many incidents to illustrate the manners of them both more strongly ; and is what they call a contrast in painting.

v. 11. *The son of Panthus.*] The conduct of Homer is admirable, in bringing Euphorbus and Menelaus together upon this occasion ; for hardly any thing but such a signal revenge for the death of his brother, could have made Euphorbus stand the encounter. Menelaus putting him in mind of the death of his brother, gives occasion, I think, to one of the finest answers in all Homer ; in which the insolence of Menelaus is retorted in a way to draw pity from every reader ; and I believe there is hardly one, after such a speech, that would not wish Euphorbus had the better of Menelaus : a writer of romances would not have failed to have given Euphorbus the victory. But however, it was fitter to make Menelaus, who had received the greatest injury, do the most revengeful actions.

Book XVII.     H O M E R's I L I A D.     269

To me the spoils my prowess won, resign ;     15

Depart with life, and leave the glory mine.

The Trojan thus : the Spartan monarch burn'd  
With gen'rous anguish, and in scorn return'd.

Laugh'st thou not, Jove ! from thy superior throne,  
When mortals boast of prowess not their own ?     20

Not thus the lion glories in his might,

Nor panther braves his spotted foe in fight,

Nor thus the boar (those terrors of the plain)

Man only vaunts his force, and vaunts in vain.

But far the vainest of the boastful kind     25

These sons of Panthus vent their haughty mind.

Yet 'twas but late, beneath my conqu'ring steel

This boaster's brother, Hyperenor, fell,

Against our arm, which rashly he defy'd,

Vain was his vigour, and as vain his pride.     30

These eyes beheld him on the dust expire, .

No more to cheer his spouse, or glad his fire.

Presumptuous youth ! like his shall be thy doom,

Go, wait thy brother to the Stygian gloom ;

Or while thou may'st, avoid the threaten'd fate ;     35

Fools stay to feel it, and are wise too late.

Unmov'd, Euphorbus thus : That action known,  
Come, for my brother's blood repay thy own.

His weeping father claims thy destin'd head,

And spouse, a widow in her bridal bed.     40

On these thy conquer'd spoils I shall bestow,

To soothe a consort's and a parent's woe.

No longer then defer the glorious strife,  
Let heav'n decide our fortune, fame, and life.

Swift as the word the missile lance he flings, 45  
The well-aim'd weapon on the buckler rings,  
But blunted by the brass innoxious falls.

On Jove the father, great Atrides calls,  
Nor flies the jav'lin from his arm in vain,  
It pierc'd his throat, and bent him to the plain : 50  
Wide through the neck appears the grizly wound,  
Prone sinks the warrior, and his arms resound.

The shining circlets of his golden hair,  
Which ev'n the graces might be proud to wear,  
Instarr'd with gems and gold, bestrow the shore, 55  
With dust dishonour'd, and deform'd with gore.

As the young olive, in some sylvan scene,  
Crown'd by fresh fountains with eternal green,

v. 55. *Instarr'd with gems and gold.*] We have seen here a Trojan who used gold and silver to adorn his hair; which made Pliny say, that he doubted whether the women were the first that used those ornaments. *Est quidem apud eundem [Homerum] virorum crinibus aurum implexum, ideo nescio an prior usus a fœminis cœperit*, lib. 33. cap. 1. He might likewise have strengthened his doubt by the custom of the Athenians, who put into their hair little grasshoppers of gold. Dacier.

v. 57. *As the young olive, etc.*] This exquisite simile finely illustrates the beauty and sudden fall of Euphorbus, in which the allusion to that circumstance of his comely hair is peculiarly happy. Porphyry and Jamblicus acquaint us of the particular affection Pythagoras had for these verses, which he set to the harp,

Lifts the gay head, in snowy flow'rets fair,  
And plays and dances to the gentle air ; 60  
When lo ! a whirlwind from high heav'n invades  
The tender plant, and withers all its shades :  
It lies up-rooted from its genial bed,  
A lovely ruin now defac'd and dead.  
Thus young, thus beautiful, Euphorbus lay, 65  
While the fierce Spartan tore his arms away.  
Proud of his deed, and glorious in the prize,  
Affrighted Troy the tow'ring victor flies :  
Flies, as before some mountain lion's ire  
The village curs, and trembling swains retire ; 70  
When o'er the slaughter'd bull they hear him rore,  
And see his jaws defil'd with smoaking gore ;

and used to repeat as his own Epicedion. Perhaps it was his fondness of them, which put it into his head to say, that his soul transmigrated to him from this hero. However it was, this conceit of Pythagoras is famous in antiquity, and has given occasion to a dialogue in Lucian, entituled, *The Cock*, which is, I think, the finest piece of that author.

v. 65. *Thus young, thus beautiful, Euphorbus lay.*] This is the only Trojan whose death the poet laments, that he might do the more honour to Patroclus, his hero's friend. The comparison here used is very proper, for the olive always preserves its beauty. But where the poet speaks of the Lapithæ, a hardy and warlike people, he compares them to oaks, that stand unmoved in storms and tempests ; and where Hector falls by Ajax, he likens him to an oak struck down by Jove's thunder. Just after this soft comparison upon the beauty of Euphorbus, he passes to another full of strength and terror, that of the lion. Eustathius.

All pale with fear, at distance scatter'd round,  
They shout incessant, and the vales resound.

Meanwhile Apollo view'd with envious eyes, 75  
And urg'd great Hector to dispute the prize,  
(In Mentès' shape, beneath whose martial care  
The rough Ciconians learn'd the trade of war)  
Forbear, he cry'd, with fruitless speed to chase  
Achilles' courfers of ethereal race ; 80.

They stoop not, these, to mortal man's command,  
Or stoop to none but great Achilles' hand.

Too long amus'd with a pursuit so vain,  
Turn, and behold the brave Euphorbus slain !  
By Sparta slain ! for ever now suppress'd 85  
The fire which burn'd in that undaunted breast !

Thus having spoke, Apollo wing'd his flight,  
And mix'd with mortals in the toils of fight :  
His words infix'd unutterable care  
Deep in great Hector's soul : through all the war 90  
He darts his anxious eye ; and instant, view'd

The breathless hero in his blood imbru'd,  
(Forth welling from the wound, as prone he lay)  
And in the victor's hands the shining prey.  
Sheath'd in bright arms, through cleaving ranks he flies,  
And sends his voice in thunder to the skies : 96

Fierce as a flood of flame by Vulcan sent,  
It flew, and fir'd the nations as it went.  
Atrides from the voice the storm divin'd,  
And thus explor'd his own unconquer'd mind. 100



Then shall I quit Patroclus on the plain,  
 Slain in my cause, and for my honour slain ?  
 Desert the arms, the relics of my friend ?  
 Or singly, Hector and his troops attend ?  
 Sure where such partial favour heav'n bestow'd, 105  
 To brave the hero were to brave the god :  
 Forgive me, Greece, if once I quit the field :  
 'Tis not to Hector, but to heav'n I yield.  
 Yet, nor the god, nor heav'n, should give me fear,  
 Did but the voice of Ajax reach my ear : 110  
 Still would we turn, still battle on the plains,  
 And give Achilles all that yet remains  
 Of his and our Patroclus—This, no more,  
 The time allow'd : Troy thicken'd on the shore,  
 A fable scene ! The terrors Hector led. 115  
 Slow he recedes, and sighing, quits the dead.  
 So from the fold th' unwilling lion parts,  
 Forc'd by loud clamours, and a storm of darts ;

v. 110. *Did but the voice of Ajax reach my ear.*] How observable is Homer's art of illustrating the valour and glory of his heroes ! Menelaus, who sees Hector and all the Trojans rushing upon him, would not retire if Apollo did not support them ; and though Apollo does support them, he would oppose even Apollo, were Ajax but near him. This is glorious for Menelaus, and yet more glorious for Ajax, and very suitable to his character ; for Ajax was the bravest of the Greeks, next to Achilles. Dacier. Eustathius.

v. 117. *So from the fold th' unwilling lion.*] The beauty of the retreat of Menelaus is worthy notice. Homer is a great observer of natural imagery, that brings

He flies indeed, but threatens as he flies,  
 With heart indignant and retorted eyes. 120  
 Now enter'd in the Spartan ranks, he turn'd  
 His manly breast, and with new fury burn'd,  
 O'er all the black battalions sent his view,  
 And through the cloud the god-like Ajax knew;  
 Where lab'ring on the left the warrior stood, 125  
 All grim in arms, and cover'd o'er with blood,  
 There breathing courage, where the god of day  
 Had sunk each heart with terror and dismay.

To him the king. Oh Ajax, oh my friend;  
 Haste, and Patroclus' lov'd remains defend: 130  
 The body to Achilles to restore  
 Demands our care; alas, we can no more!  
 For naked now, despoil'd of arms he lies;  
 And Hector glories in the dazling prize.  
 He said, and touch'd his heart. The raging pair 135  
 Pierce the thick battle, and provoke the war.  
 Already had stern Hector seiz'd his head,  
 And doom'd to Trojan dogs th'unhappy dead;

the thing represented before our view. It is indeed true, that lions, tygers, and beasts of prey are the only objects that can properly represent warriors; and therefore it is no wonder they are so often introduced: the inanimate things, as floods, fires, and storms, are the best, and only images of battles.

v. 137. *Already had stern Hector, etc.*] Homer takes care, so long before-hand, to lessen in his reader's mind the horror he may conceive from the cruelty that Achilles will exercise upon the body of Hector.

But soon as Ajax rear'd his tow'r-like shield,  
 Sprung to his car, and measur'd back the field. 140  
 His train to Troy the radiant armour bear,  
 To stand a trophy of his fame in war.

Meanwhile great Ajax, his broad shield display'd,  
 Guards the dead hero with the dreadful shade;  
 And now before, and now behind he stood : 145  
 Thus in the centre of some gloomy wood,  
 With many a step the lionsess surrounds  
 Her tawny young, beset by men and hounds ;  
 Elate her heart, and rousing all her pow'rs,  
 Dark o'er the fiery balls each hanging eye-brow low'rs.  
 Fast by his side, the gen'rous Spartan glows 151  
 With great revenge, and feeds his inward woes.

But Glaucus leader of the Lycian aids,  
 On Hector frowning, thus his flight upbraids.  
 Where now in Hector shall we Hector find ? 155  
 A manly form without a manly mind.  
 Is this, O chief ! a hero's boasted fame ?  
 How vain, without the merit, is the name ?  
 Since battle is renounc'd, thy thoughts employ  
 What other methods may preserve thy Troy : 160  
 'Tis time to try if Ilion's state can stand  
 By thee alone, nor ask a foreign hand ;

That cruelty will be only the punishment of this which  
 Hector here exercises upon the body of Patroclus ; he  
 drags him, he designs to cut off his head, and to leave his  
 body upon the ramparts, exposed to dogs and birds of  
 prey. Eustathius.

Mean, empty boast ! but shall the Lycians stake

Their lives for you ? those Lycians you forsake ?

What from thy thankless arms can we expect ? 165

Thy friend Sarpedon proves thy base neglect :

Say, shall our slaughter'd bodies guard your walls,

While unreveng'd the great Sarpedon falls ?

Ev'n where he dy'd for Troy, you left him there,

A feast for dogs, and all the fowls of air. 170

On my command if any Lycian wait,

Hence let him march, and give up Troy to fate.

Did such a spirit as the gods impart

Impel one Trojan hand, or Trojan heart ;

(Such, as should burn in ev'ry soul, that draws 175

The sword for glory, and his country's cause)

Ev'n yet our mutual arms we might employ,

And drag yon' carcase to the walls of Troy.

Oh ! were Patroclus ours, we might obtain

Sarpedon's arms, and honour'd corse again ! 180

Greece with Achilles' friend should be repaid,

And thus due honours purchas'd to his shade.

But words are vain——Let Ajax once appear,

And Hector trembles and recedes with fear ;

v. 169. ————*You left him there*

*A prey to dogs———*]

It was highly dishonourable in Hector to forsake the body of a friend and guest, and against the laws of Jupiter Xenius, or *hospitalis*. For Glaucus knew nothing of Sarpedon's being honoured with burial by the gods, and sent embalmed into Lycia. Eustathius.

Book XVII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 277

Thou dar'st not meet the terrors of his eye ; 185

And lo ! already thou prepar'st to fly.

The Trojan chief with fix'd resentment ey'd

The Lycian leader, and sedate reply'd.

Say, is it just, my friend, that Hector's ear  
From such a warrior such a speech should hear ? 190

I deem'd thee once the wisest of thy kind,

But ill this insult suits a prudent mind.

I shun great Ajax ! I desert my train !

'Tis mine to prove the rash assertion vain ;

I joy to mingle where the battle bleeds, 195

And hear the thunder of the sounding steeds.

But Jove's high will is ever uncontroll'd,

The strong he withers, and confounds the bold ;

Now crowns with fame the mighty man, and now

Strikes the fresh garland from the victor's brow ! 200

Come, through yon' squadrons let us hew the way,

And thou be witness, if I fear to-day ;

If yet a Greek the sight of Hector dread,

Or yet their hero dare defend the dead.

Then turning to the martial hosts, he cries, 205

Ye Trojans, Dardans, Lycians, and allies !

v. 193. *I shun great Ajax!*] Hector takes no notice of the affronts that Glaucus had thrown upon him, as knowing he had in some respect a just cause to be angry ; but he cannot put up what he had said of his fearing Ajax, to which part he only replies : this is very agreeable to his heroic character. Eustathius.

Be men, my friends, in action as in name,  
 And yet be mindful of your ancient fame.  
 Hector in proud Achilles' arms shall shine,  
 Torn from his friend, by right of conquest mine. 210

He strode along the field, as thus he said :  
 (The sable plumage nodded o'er his head)  
 Swift through the spacious plain he sent a look ;  
 One instant saw, one instant overtook  
 The distant band, that on the sandy shore 215  
 The radiant spoils to sacred Ilion bore.

v. 209. *Hector in proud Achilles' arms shall shine.*] The ancients have observed, that Homer causes the arms of Achilles to fall into Hector's power, to equal, in some sort, those two heroes, in the battle wherein he is going to engage them. Otherwise it might be urged, that Achilles could not have killed Hector without the advantage of having his armour made by the hand of a god, whereas Hector's was only of the hand of a mortal ; but since both were clad in armour made by Vulcan, Achilles' victory will be complete, and in its full lustre. Besides this reason (which is for necessity and probability) there is also another, for ornament ; for Homer here prepares to introduce that beautiful episode of the divine armour, which Vulcan makes for Achilles. Eustathius.

v. 216. *The radiant arms to sacred Ilion bore.*] A difficulty may arise here, and the question may be asked, why Hector sent these arms to Troy ? Why did not he take them at first ? there are three answers, which I think are all plausible. The first, that Hector having killed Patroclus, and seeing the day very far advanced, had no need to take those arms for a fight almost at an end. The second, that he was impatient to shew to Priam and Andromache those glorious spoils.



There his own mail unbrac'd the field bestrow'd ;

His train to Troy convey'd the massy load.

Now blazing in th' immortal arms he stands,

The work and present of celestial hands ; 220

By aged Peleus to Achilles given,

As first to Peleus by the court of heav'n :

His father's arms not long Achilles wears,

Forbid by fate to reach his father's years.

Him, proud in triumph, glitt'ring from afar, 225

The god whose thunder rends the troubled air,

Beheld with pity ; as apart he fate,

And conscious, look'd through all the scene of fate.

He shook the sacred honours of his head ;

Olympus trembled, and the Godhead said : 230

Ah wretched man ! unmindful of thy end !

A moment's glory, and what fates attend ?

Thirdly, he perhaps at first intended to hang them up in some temple. Glaucus's speech makes him change his resolution, he runs after those arms to fight against Ajax, and to win Patroclus's body from him. Dacier.

Homer, says Eustathius, does not suffer the arms to be carried into Troy for these reasons ; that Hector by wearing them might the more encourage the Trojans, and be the more formidable to the Greeks : that Achilles may recover them again when he kills Hector : and that he may conquer him, even when he is strengthened with that divine armour.

v. 231. *Jupiter's speech to Hector.*] The poet prepares us for the death of Hector, perhaps to please the Greek readers, who might be troubled to see him shining in their hero's arms. Therefore Jupiter expresses

In heav'nly panoply divinely bright

Thou stand'st, and armies tremble at thy sight,

As at Achilles' self ! beneath thy dart 235

Lies slain the great Achilles' dearer part :

Thou from the mighty dead those arms hast torn,

Which once the greatest of mankind had worn.

Yet live ! I give thee one illustrious day,

A blaze of glory ere thou fad'st away. 240

For ah ! no more Andromache shall come,

With joyful tears to welcome Hector home ;

No more officious, with endearing charms,

From thy tir'd limbs unbrace Pelides' arms !

Then with his fable brow he gave the nod, 245

That seals his word ; the sanction of the god.

his sorrow at the approaching fate of this unfortunate prince, promises to repay his loss of life with glory, and nods, to give a certain confirmation to his words. He says, Achilles is the bravest Greek, as Glaucus had just said before ; the poet thus giving him the greatest commendations, by putting his praise in the mouth of a god, and of an enemy, who were neither of them like to be prejudiced in his favour. Eustathius.

How beautiful is that sentiment upon the miserable state of mankind, introduced here so artfully, and so strongly enforced, by being put into the mouth of the supreme being ! And how pathetic the denunciation of Hector's death, by that circumstance of Andromache's disappointment, when she shall no more receive her hero glorious from the battle, in the armour of his conquered enemy !

The stubborn arms, (by Jove's command dispos'd)  
 Conform'd spontaneous, and around him clos'd;  
 Fill'd with the god, enlarg'd his members grew,  
 Through all his veins a sudden vigour flew, 250  
 The blood in brisker tides began to roll,  
 And Mars himself came rushing on his soul.  
 Exhorting loud through all the field he strode,  
 And look'd, and mov'd, Achilles, or a god.  
 Now Melethles, Glaucus, Medon he inspires, 255  
 Now Phorcys, Chromius, and Hippothous fires;  
 The great Therfilochus like fury found,  
 Asteropæus kindled at the sound,  
 And Ennomus, in augury renown'd.  
 Hear, all ye hosts, and hear, unnumber'd bands 260  
 Of neighb'ring nations, or of distant lands!

v. 247. *The stubborn arms, etc.*] The words are,

ἦ, καὶ κυανέησιν ἐπ' ὀφρῶσσι νεῦσε Κρονίων,

Ἐκτορε, δ' ἡγεμοσε τεύχε' ἐπὶ χροί.

If we give ἡγεμοσε a passive signification, it will be, the arms fitted Hector; but if an active (as those take it who would put a greater difference between Hector and Achilles) then it belongs to Jupiter: and the sense will be, Jupiter made the arms fit for him, which were too large before: I have chosen the last as the more poetical sense.

v. 260. — *Unnumber'd bands*

*Of neighbouring nations.*—]

Eustathius has very well explained the artifice of this speech of Hector, who indirectly answers all Glaucus's invectives, and humbles his vanity. Glaucus had just spoken as if the Lycians were the only allies of Troy;

'Twas not for state we summon'd you so far,  
 To boast our numbers, and the pomp of war ;  
 Ye came to fight; a valiant foe to chase,  
 To save our present, and our future race.      265

For this, our wealth, our products you enjoy,  
 And glean the relics of exhausted Troy.

Now then to conquer or to die prepare,  
 To die or conquer are the terms of war.

Whatever hand shall win Patroclus slain,      270

Whoe'er shall drag him to the Trojan train,

With Hector's self shall equal honours claim ;

With Hector part the spoil, and share the fame.

Fir'd by his words, the troops dismiss their fears,

They join, they thicken, they pretend their spears ;

Full on the Greeks they drive in firm array,      276

And each from Ajax hopes the glorious prey :

Vain hope ! what numbers shall the field o'erspread,

What victims perish round the mighty dead ?

Great Ajax mark'd the growing storm from far,      280

And thus bespoke his brother of the war.

and Hector here speaks of the numerous troops of different nations, which he expressly designs by calling them borderers upon his kingdom, thereby in some manner to exclude the Lycians, who were of a country more remote ; as if he did not vouchsafe to reckon them. He afterwards confutes what Glaucus said, “ that if the  
 “ Lycians would take his advice, they would return  
 “ home ;” for he gives them to understand, that being hired troops, they are obliged to perform their bargain and to fight till the war is at an end. Dacier.

Our fatal day, alas ! is come, my friend,

And all our wars and glories at an end !

'Tis not this corse alone we guard in vain,

Condemn'd to vultures on the Trojan plain ; 285

We too must yield : the same sad fate must fall

On thee, on me, perhaps, my friend, on all.

See what a tempest direful Hector spreads,

And lo ! it bursts, it thunders on our heads !

Call on our Greeks, if any hear the call, 290

The bravest Greeks : this hour demands them all.

The warrior rais'd his voice, and wide around

The field re-echo'd the distressful sound.

Oh chiefs ! oh princes ! to whose hand is giv'n

The rule of men ; whose glory is from heav'n ! 295

Whom with due honours both Atrides grace :

Ye guides and guardians of our Argive race !

All, whom this well-known voice shall reach from far,

All, whom I see not through this cloud of war,

Come all ! let gen'rous rage your arms employ, 300

And save Patrocius from the dogs of Troy.

Oilean Ajax first the voice obey'd,

Swift was his pace, and ready was his aid ;

v. 990. *Call on our Greeks.*] Eustathius gives three reasons why Ajax bids Menelaus call the Greeks to their assistance ; instead of calling them himself. He might be ashamed to do it, lest it should look like fear, and turn to his dishonour : or the chiefs were more likely to obey Menelaus : or he had too much business of the war upon his hands and wanted leisure more than the other.

v. 302. *Oilean Ajax first.*] Ajax Oileus, says Eu-

Next him Idomeneus, more slow with age,  
 And Merion, burning with a hero's rage. 305  
 The long succeeding numbers who can name?  
 But all were Greeks, and eager all for fame.  
 Fierce to the charge great Hector led the throng;  
 Whole Troy embodied, rush'd with shouts along.  
 Thus when a mountain billow foams and raves, 310  
 Where some swollen river disembogues his waves,  
 Full in the mouth is stopp'd the rushing tide,  
 The boiling ocean works from side to side,  
 The river trembles to his utmost shore,  
 And distant rocks rebellow to the roar. 315  
 Nor less resolv'd, the firm Achaian band  
 With brazen shields in horrid circle stand:  
 Jove, pouring darkness o'er the mingled fight,  
 Conceals the warriors shining helms in night:

stathius, is the first that comes, being brought by his  
 love to the other Ajax, as it is natural for one friend to  
 fly to the assistance of another: to which we may add,  
 he might very probably come first because he was the  
 swiftest of all the heroes.

v. 318. *Jove, pouring darkness.*] Homer, who in all  
 his former descriptions of battles is so fond of menti-  
 oning the lustre of the arms, here shades them in dark-  
 ness; perhaps alluding to the clouds of dust that were  
 raised; or to the throng of combatants; or else to de-  
 note the loss of Greece in Patroclus; or lastly, that  
 as the heavens had mourned Sarpedon in showers of  
 blood, so they might Patroclus in clouds of darkness.  
 Eustathius:



To him, the chief for whom the hosts contend, 320

Had liv'd not hateful, for he liv'd a friend :

Dead he protects him with superior care,

Nor dooms his carcase to the birds of air.

The first attack the Grecians scarce sustain,  
Repuls'd, they yield ; the Trojans seize the slain ; 325

Then fierce they rally, to revenge led on

By the swift rage of Ajax Telamon.

(Ajax to Peleus' son the second name,

In graceful stature next, and next in fame.)

With headlong force the foremost ranks he tore ; 330

So through the thicket bursts the mountain-boar,

And rudely scatters far to distance round,

The frighted hunter and the baying hound.

The son of Lethus, brave Pelasgus' heir,

Hippothous, dragg'd the carcase through the war ; 335

The sinewy ancles bor'd, the feet he bound

With thongs, inserted through the double wound :

Inevitable fate o'ertakes the deed ;

Doom'd by great Ajax' vengeful lance to bleed ;

It cleft the helmet's brazen cheeks in twain ; 340

The shatter'd crest, and horse-hair strow the plain ;

With nerves relax'd he tumbles to the ground :

The brain comes gushing through the ghastly wound ;

He drops Patroclus' foot, and o'er him spread

Now lies, a sad companion of the dead : 345

Far from Larissa lies, his native air,

And ill requites his parent's tender care.

Lamented youth ! in life's first bloom he fell,  
Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell.

Once more at Ajax, Hector's jav'lin flies ;      350  
The Grecian. marking as it cut the skies,  
Shunn'd the descending death ; which hissing on,  
Stretch'd in the dust the great Iphytus' son,  
Schedius the brave, of all the Phocian kind  
The boldest warrior, and the noblest mind :      355  
In little Panope for strength renown'd,  
He held his seat, and rul'd the realms around.  
Plung'd in his throat, the weapon drank his blood,  
And deep transpiercing, through the shoulder stood ;  
In clanging arms the hero fell, and all      360  
The fields resounded with his weighty fall.  
Phorcys, as slain Hippothous he defends,  
The Telamonian lance his belly rends ;  
The hollow armour bursts before the stroke,  
And through the wound the rushing entrails broke, 365

v. 356. *Panope renown'd.*] Panope was a small town twenty stadia from Chæronea, on the side of mount Parnassus, and it is hard to know why Homer gives it the epithet of *renowned*, and makes it the residence of Schedius, king of the Phocians ; when it was but nine hundred paces in circuit, and had no palace, nor gymnasium, nor theatre, nor market, nor fountain ; nothing, in short, that ought to have been in a town which is the residence of a king. Pausanias, in Phocic. gives the reason of it ; he says, that as Phocis was exposed on that side to the inroads of the Bœotians, Schedius made use of Panope as a fort of citadel, or place of arms. Dacier.

In strong convulsions panting on the sands  
He lies, and grasps the dust with dying hands.

Struck at the sight recede the Trojan train :  
The shouting Argives strip the heroes slain.  
And now had Troy, by Greece compell'd to yield, 370  
Fled to her ramparts, and resign'd the field ;  
Greece, in her native fortitude elate,  
With Jove averse, had turn'd the scale of fate ;  
But Phœbus urg'd Æneas to the fight ;  
He seem'd like aged Periphas to fight ;      375  
(A herald in Anchises' love grown old,  
Rever'd for prudence, and with prudence, bold.)

Thus he——what methods yet, oh chief ! remain,  
To save your Troy, though heav'n its fall ordain ?  
There have been heroes, who by virtuous care,      380  
By valour, numbers, and by arts of war,  
Have forc'd the pow'rs to spare a sinking state,  
And gain'd at length the glorious odds of fate.  
But you, when fortune smiles, when Jove declares  
His partial favour, and assists your wars,      385  
Your shameful efforts 'gainst yourselves employ,  
And force th' unwilling god to ruin Troy.

Æneas through the form assum'd descries  
The pow'r conceal'd, and thus to Hector cries.

v. 375. *He seem'd like aged Periphas.*] The speech of Periphas to Æneas hints at the double fate, and the necessity of means. It is much like that of St. Paul, after he has promised that no-body should perish ; he says, *except these abide, ye cannot be saved.*

Oh lasting shame ! to our own fears a prey, 390  
We seek our ramparts, and desert the day.  
A god, nor is he less, my bosom warms,  
And tells me, Jove asserts the Trojan arms.  
He spoke, and foremost to the combat flew :  
The bold example all his hosts pursue. 395  
Then first, Leocritus beneath him bled,  
In vain belov'd by valiant Lycomede ;  
Who view'd his fall, and grieving at the chance,  
Swift to revenge it, sent his angry lance :  
The whirling lance, with vig'rous force addrest, 400  
Descends, and pants in Apisaon's breast :  
From rich Pæonia's vales the warrior came,  
Next thee, Asteropus ! in place and fame.  
Asteropus with grief beheld the slain,  
And rush'd to combat, but he rush'd in vain : 405  
Indissolubly firm, around the dead,  
Rank within rank, on buckler buckler spread,  
And hem'd with bristled spears, the Grecians stood ;  
A brazen bulwark, and an iron wood.  
Great Ajax eyes them with incessant care, 410  
And in an orb contracts the crouded war,  
Close in their ranks commands to fight or fall,  
And stands the centre and the soul of all :  
Fixt on the spot they war, and wounded, wound ;  
A sanguine torrent steeps the reeking ground ; 415  
On heaps the Greeks, on heaps the Trojans bled,  
And thick'ning round them, rise the hills of dead.

Greece, in close order, and collected might,  
 Yet suffers least, and sways the wav'ring fight;  
 Fierce as conflicting fires, the combat burns, 420  
 And now it rises, now it sinks, by turns.  
 In one thick darkness all the fight was lost;  
 The sun, the moon, and all th' ethereal host  
 Seem'd as extinct; day ravish'd from their eyes,  
 And all heav'n's splendors blotted from the skies. 425  
 Such o'er Patroclus body hung the night,  
 The rest in sunshine fought, and open light:  
 Unclouded there, th' aerial azure spread,  
 No vapour rested on the mountain's head,  
 The golden sun pour'd forth a stronger ray, 430  
 And all the broad expansion flam'd with day.  
 Dispers'd around the plain, by fits they fight,  
 And here, and there, their scatter'd arrows light:  
 But death and darkness o'er the carcase spread,  
 There burn'd the war, and there the mighty bled. 435  
 Meanwhile the sons of Nestor, in the rear,  
 Their fellows routed, toss the distant spear,

v. 422. *In one thick darkness, etc.*] The darkness spread over the body of Patroclus is artful upon several accounts. First, a fine image of poetry. Next, a token of Jupiter's love to a righteous man: but the chief design is to protract the action; which, if the Trojans had seen the spot, must have been decided one way or other in a very short time. Besides, the Trojans having the better in the action, must have seized the body contrary to the intention of the author. There are innumerable instances of these little niceties and particularities of conduct in Homer.

v. 436. *Meanwhile the sons of Nestor, in the rear,*

And skirmish wide : so Nestor gave command,  
 When from the ships he sent the Pylian band.  
 The youthful brothers thus for fame contend, 440  
 Nor knew the fortune of Achilles' friend ;  
 In thought they view'd him still, with martial joy,  
 Glorious in arms, and dealing death to Troy.

But round the corse, the heroes pant for breath,  
 And thick and heavy grows the work of death: 445  
 O'erlabour'd now, with dust, and sweat, and gore,  
 Their knees, their legs, their feet are cover'd o'er ;  
 Drops follow drops, the clouds on clouds arise,  
 And carnage clogs their hands, and darkness fills their  
 As when a slaughter'd bull's yet reeking hide, [eyes.  
 Strain'd with full force, and tugg'd from side to side,  
 'The brawny curriers stretch ; and labour o'er,  
 'Th' extended surface, drunk with fat and gore ;  
 So tugging round the corps both armies stood ;  
 The mangled body bath'd in sweat and blood : 455

etc.] It is not without reason Homer in this place makes particular mention of the sons of Nestor. It is to prepare us against he sends one of them to Achilles, to tell him the death of his friend.

v. 450. *As when a slaughter'd bull's yet reeking hide*] Homer gives us a most lively description of their drawing the body on all sides, and instructs in the ancient manner of stretching hides, being first made soft and supple with oil. And though this comparison be one of those mean and humble ones which some have objected to, yet it has also its admirers for being so expressive, and for representing to the imagination the most strong and exact idea of the subject in hand. Eustathius.



While Greeks and Ilians equal strength employ,  
 Now to the ships to force it, now to Troy.  
 Not Pallas' self, her breast when fury warms,  
 Nor he, whose anger sets the world in arms,  
 Could blame this scene ; such rage, such horror reign'd ;  
 Such, Jove to honour the great dead ordain'd. 461

Achilles in his ships at distance lay,  
 Nor knew the fatal fortune of the day ;  
 He, yet unconscious of Patroclus' fall,  
 In dust extended under Ilion's wall, 465  
 Expects him glorious from the conquer'd plain,  
 And for his wish'd return prepares in vain ;  
 Though well he knew, to make proud Ilion bend,  
 Was more than heav'n had destin'd to his friend,  
 Perhaps to him : this Thetis had reveal'd ; 470  
 The rest, in pity to her son, conceal'd.

v. 458. *Not Pallas' self.*] Homer says in the original, “ Minerva could not have found fault, though she “ were angry.” Upon which Eustathius ingeniously observes, how common and natural it is for persons in anger to turn critics, and find faults where there are none.

v. 568. ——— *To make proud Ilion bend,*

*Was more than heav'n had promis'd to his friend,*

*Perhaps to him ——— ]*

In these words the poet artfully hints at Achilles's death ; he makes him not absolutely to flatter himself with the hopes of ever taking Troy, in his own person ; however he does not say this expressly, but passes it over as an ungrateful subject. Eustathius.

v. 471. *The rest, in pity to her son, conceal'd.*] Here, says the same author, we have two rules laid down for common use. One, not to tell our friends all their mis-

Still rag'd the conflict round the hero dead,  
 And heaps on heaps, by mutual wounds they bled.  
 Curs'd be the man (ev'n private Greeks would say)  
 Who dares desert this well-disputed day ! 475  
 First may the cleaving earth before our eyes  
 Gape wide, and drink our blood for sacrifice !  
 First perish all, ere haughty Troy shall boast  
 We lost Patroclus, and our glory lost.

Thus they. While with one voice the Trojans said,  
 Grant this day, Jove ! or heap us on the dead ! 481

Then clash their sounding arms ; the clangors rise,  
 And shake the brazen concave of the skies.

chances at once, it being often necessary to hide part of them, as Thetis does from Achilles : the other, not to push men of courage upon all that is possible for them to do. Thus Achilles, though he thought Patroclus able to drive the Trojans back to their gates, yet he does not order him to do so much ; but only to save the ships, and beat them back into the field.

Homer's admonishing the reader that Achilles's mother had concealed the circumstance of the death of his friend when she instructed him in his fate ; and that all he knew, was only that Troy could not be taken at that time ; this is a great instance of his care of the probability, and of his having the whole plan of the poem at once in his head. For upon the supposition that Achilles was instructed in his fate, it was a natural objection, how came he to hazard his friend ? If he was ignorant on the other hand of the impossibility of Troy's being taken at that time, he might for all he knew, be robbed by his friend (of whose valour he had so good an opinion) of that glory, which he was unwilling to part with.

Meantime, at distance from the scene of blood,  
 The pensive steeds of great Achilles stood ; 485  
 Their godlike master slain before their eyes,  
 They wept, and shar'd in human miseries.

v. 484. *At distance from the scene of blood.*] If the horses had not gone aside out of the war, Homer could not have introduced so well what he designed to their honour. So he makes them weeping in secret, as their master Achilles used to do, and afterwards coming into the battle, where they are taken notice of and pursued by Hector. Eustathius.

v. 485. *The pensive steeds of great Achilles, etc.*] It adds a great beauty to the poem when inanimate things act like animate. Thus the heavens tremble at Jupiter's nod, the sea parts itself to receive Neptune, the groves of Ida shake beneath Juno's feet, etc. As also to find animate or brute creatures address'd to, as if rational : so Hector encourages his horses ; and one of Achilles's is not only endowed with speech, but with foreknowledge of future events. Here they weep for Patroclus, and stand fixed and immoveable with grief : thus is this hero universally mourned, and every thing concurs to lament his loss. Eustathius.

As to the particular fiction of the horses weeping, it is countenanced both by naturalists and historians. Aristotle and Pliny write, that these animals often deplore their masters lost in battle, and even shed tears for them. So Solinus, c. 47. Ælian relates the like of elephants, when they are carried from their native country, De Animal lib. 10. c. 17. Suetonius in the life of Cæsar, tells us, that several horses which, at the passage of the Rubicon, had been consecrated to Mars, and turned loose on the banks, were observed for some days after to abstain from feeding. and to weep abundantly. *Proximus diebus, equorum greges quos in trajiciendo Rubicone flumine Marti consecrarat, ac sine custode vagos dimise-*

In vain Automedon now shakes the rein,  
 Now plies the lash, and sooths and threats in vain;  
 Nor to the fight, nor Hellespont they go, 490  
 Restive they stood, and obstinate in woe :  
 Still as a tomb-stone, never to be mov'd,  
 On some good man, or woman unprov'd  
 Lays its eternal weight ; or fix'd as stands  
 A marble courser by the sculptor's hands, 495

*rat, comperit pabulo pertinacissime abstinere, ubertim-  
 que flere. cap. 81.*

Virgil could not forbear copying this beautiful circumstance in those fine lines on the horse of Pallas.

*Post bellator equus, positus insignibus, Æthon  
 It lacrymans, guttisque humectat grandibus ora.*

v. 494. ——— Or fix'd, as stands  
 A marble courser, etc.]

Homer alludes to the custom in those days of placing columns upon tombs, on which columns there were frequently chariots with two or four horses. This furnished Homer with this beautiful image, as if these horses meant to remain there, to serve for an immortal monument to Patroclus. Dacier.

I believe M. Dacer refines too much on this note. Homer says, — ἡς γυναικὸς, and seems to turn the thought only on the firmness of the column, and not on the imagery of it : which would give it an air a little too modern, like that of Shakespear, *She sate like Patience on a monument, smiling at Grief.* — Be it as it will, this conjecture is ingenious ; and the whole comparison is as beautiful as just. The horses standing still to mourn for their master, could not be more finely represented than by the dumb sorrow of images standing over a tomb. Perhaps the very posture in which these horses are de-

Plac'd on the hero's grave. Along their face,  
The big round drops cours'd down with silent pace,  
Conglobing on the dust. Their manes, that late  
Circled their arched necks, and wav'd in state,  
Trail'd on the dust beneath the yoke were spread, 500  
And prone to earth was hung their languid head:  
Nor Jove disdain'd to cast a pitying look,  
While thus relenting to the steeds he spoke.

Unhappy courfers of immortal strain!  
Exempt from age, and deathless now in vain; 505  
Did we your race on mortal man bestow,  
Only, alas! to share in mortal woe?  
For ah! what is there, of inferior birth,  
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth;  
What wretched creature of what wretched kind, 510  
Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind?  
A miserable race! but cease to mourn:  
For not by you shall Priam's son be borne  
High on the splendid car: one glorious prize  
He rashly boasts; the rest our will denies. 515  
Ourself will swiftness to your nerves impart,  
Ourself with rising spirits swell your heart.  
Automedon your rapid flight shall bear  
Safe to the navy through the storm of war.

scribed, their heads bowed down, and their manes falling in the dust, has an allusion to the attitude in which those statues on monuments were usually represented: there are bas-reliefs that favour this conjecture.

For yet 'tis giv'n to Troy, to ravage o'er 520  
 The field, and spread her slaughters to the shore ;  
 The sun shall see her conquer, 'till his fall  
 With sacred darkness shades the face of all.

He said ; and breathing in th'immortal horse  
 Excessive spirit, urg'd them to the course ; 525  
 From their high manes they shake the dust, and bear  
 The kindling chariot through the parted war :  
 So flies a vulture through the clam'rous train  
 Of geese, that scream, and scatter round the plain.  
 From danger now with swiftest speed they flew, 530  
 And now to conquest with like speed pursue ;  
 Sole in the feat the charioteer remains,  
 Now plies the jav'lin, now directs the reins :  
 Him brave Alcimedon beheld distrest,  
 Approach'd the chariot, and the chief address. 535

What god provokes thee, rashly thus to dare,  
 Alone, unaided, in the thickest war ?  
 Alas ! thy friend is slain, and Hector wields  
 Achilles' arms triumphant in the fields.

v. 522. *The sun shall see Troy conquer.*] It is worth observing with what art and œconomy Homer conducts his fable, to bring on the catastrophe. Achilles must hear Patroclus's death ; Hector must fall by his hand : this cannot happen if the armies continue fighting about the body of Patroclus under the walls of Troy. Therefore, to change the face of affairs, Jupiter is going to raise the courage of the Trojans, and make them repulse and chase the Greeks again as far as their fleet : this obliges Achilles to go forth, though without arms, and thereby every thing comes to an issue. Dacier.



In happy time, the charioteer replies, 540  
 'The bold Alcimedon now greets my eyes ;  
 No Greek like him, the heav'nly steeds restrains,  
 Or hold their fury in suspended reins ;  
 Patroclus, while he liv'd, their rage could tame,  
 But now Patroclus is an empty name ! 545  
 To thee I yield the feat to thee resign  
 The ruling charge: the task of fight be mine.

He said. Alcimedon, with active heat,  
 Snatches the reins, and vaults into the feat.  
 His friend descends. The chief of Troy descry'd, 550  
 And call'd Æneas fighting near his side.  
 Lo, to my fight beyond our hope restor'd,  
 Achilles' car, deserted of its lord !  
 The glorious steeds our ready arms invite,  
 Scarce their weak drivers guide them thro' the fight : 555

v. 555. *Scarce their weak drivers.*] There was but one driver since Alcimedon was alone upon the chariot; and Automedon was got down to fight. But in poetry, as well as in painting, there is often but one moment to be taken hold on. Hector sees Alcimedon mount the chariot, before Automedon was descended from it; and thereupon judging of their intention, and seeing them both as yet upon the chariot, he calls to Æneas. He terms them both drivers in mockery, because he saw them take the reins one after the other; as if he said, that chariot had two drivers, but never a fighter. It is one single moment that makes this image. In reading the poets one often falls into great perplexities, for want of rightly distinguishing the point of time in which they speak. Dacier.

The art of Homer, in this whole passage concerning

Can such opponents stand, when we assail ?

Unite thy force, my friend, and we prevail.

The son of Venus to the counsel yields ;

Then o'er their backs they spread their solid shields ;

With brass refulgent the broad surface shin'd, 560

And thick bull-hides the spacious concave lin'd.

Them Chromius follows, Aretus succeeds,

Each hopes the conquest of the lofty steeds ;

In vain, brave youths, with glorious hopes ye burn,

In vain advance ! not fated to return. 565

Automedon, is very remarkable ; in finding out the only proper occasion, for so renowned a person as the charioteer of Achilles to signalize his valour. (*burn,*

v. 564. *In vain, brave youths, with glorious hopes ye  
In vain advance, not fated to return.*]

These beautiful anticipations are frequent in the poets, who effect to speak in the character of prophets, and men inspired with the knowledge of futurity. Thus Virgil to Turnus,

*Nescia mens hominum fati.—Turno tempus erit, etc.*

So Tasso, cant. 12. when Argante had vowed the destruction of Tancréd.

*O vani giuramenti ! Ecco contrari  
Seguir tosto gli effetti a l' alta speme :  
E cader questi in teneon pari estinto  
Sotto colui, ch' ei fa gia preso, e vinto.*

And Milton makes the like apostrophe to Eve at her leaving Adam before she met the serpent.

—————*She to him engag'd  
To be return'd by noon amid the bower,*

Unmov'd, Automedon attends the fight,  
 Implores th' Eternal, and collects his might.  
 Then turning to his friend, with dauntless mind :  
 Oh keep the foaming courfers close behind !  
 Full on my shoulders let their nostrils blow, 570  
 For hard the fight, determin'd is the foe ;  
 'Tis Hector comes ; and when he seeks the prize,  
 War knows no mean : he wins it, or he dies.

Then through the field he sends his voice aloud,  
 And calls th'Ajaces from the warring croud, 575  
 With great Atrides. Hither turn, he said,  
 Turn, where distress demands immediate aid ;  
 The dead, encircled by his friends, forego,  
 And save the living from a fiercer foe. 580  
 Unhelp'd we stand, unequal to engage  
 The force of Hector, and Æneas' rage :  
 Yet mighty as they are, my force to prove,  
 Is only mine : th'event belongs to Jove.

He spoke, and high the founding jav'lin flung, 585  
 Which pass'd the shield of Aretus the young ;  
 It pierc'd his belt. emboss'd with various art ;  
 Then in the lower belly stuck the dart.  
 As when the pond'rous axe descending full,  
 Cleaves the broad forehead of some brawny bull ; 590

*And all things in best order to invite  
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.  
 O much deceiv'd, much sailing, hapless Eve !  
 Thou never from that hour, in paradise,  
 Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose.*

Struck 'twixt the horns, he springs with many a bound,  
Then tumbling rolls enormous on the ground :  
Thus fell the youth ; the air his soul receiv'd,  
And the spear trembles as his entrails heav'd.

Now at Automedon the Trojan foe 595  
Discharg'd his lance ; the meditated blow,  
Stooping, he shunn'd ; the jav'lin idly fled,  
And hiss'd innoxious o'er the hero's head :  
Deep rooted in the ground, the forceful spear  
In long vibrations spent its fury there.  
With clashing faulchions now the chiefs had clos'd, 600  
But each brave Ajax heard, and interpos'd ;  
Nor longer Hector with his Trojans stood,  
But left their slain companion in his blood :  
His arms Automedon divests, and cries,  
Accept, Patroclus, this mean sacrifice. 605  
Thus have I sooth'd my griefs and thus have paid,  
Poor as it is, some off'ring to thy shade.

So looks the lion o'er a mangled boar,  
All grim with rage, and horrible with gore ;  
High on the chariot at one bound he sprung, 610  
And o'er his seat the bloody trophies hung.

And now Minerva, from the realms of air  
Descends impetuous, and renews the war ;  
For, pleas'd at length the Grecian arms to aid,  
The lord of thunders sent the blue-ey'd maid. 615  
As when high Jove denouncing future woe,  
O'er the dark clouds extends his purple bow,

(In sign of tempest from the troubled air,  
Or from the rage of man, destructive war)  
The drooping cattle dread th' impending skies, 620  
And from his half-till'd field the lab'rer flies.

In such a form the goddess round her drew  
A livid cloud, and to the battle flew.  
Assuming Phoenix' shape, on earth she falls,  
And in his well-known voice to Sparta calls. 625  
And lies Achilles' friend belov'd by all,  
A prey to dogs beneath the Trojan wall?  
What shame to Greece for future times to tell,  
To thee the greatest in whose cause he fell!

Oh chief! oh father! Atreus' son replies, 630  
Oh full of days! by long experience wise!  
What more desires my soul, than here unmov'd,  
To guard the body of the man I lov'd?  
Ah would Minerva send me strength to rear  
This weary'd arm, and ward the storm of war! 635  
But Hector, like the rage of fire we dread,  
And Jove's own glories blaze around his head.

Pleas'd to be first of all the pow'rs addrest,  
She breathes new vigour in her hero's breast,  
And fills with keen revenge, with fell despight, 640  
Desire of blood, and rage, and lust of fight.  
So burns the vengeful hornet, foul all o'er,  
Repuls'd in vain, and thirsty still of gore;

v. 642. *So burns the vengeful hornet, etc.*] It is literally in the Greek, *She inspired the hero with the bold-*

Bold son of Air and Heat, on angry wings  
 Untam'd, untir'd, he turns, attacks, and stings. 645  
 Fir'd with like ardour fierce Atrides flew,  
 And sent his soul with every lance he threw.

There stood a Trojan, not unknown to fame,  
 Eetion's son, and Podes was his name ;  
 With riches honour'd, and with courage blest, 650  
 By Hector lov'd, his comrade and his guest ;  
 Through his broad belt the spear a passage found,  
 And pond'rous as he falls, his arms resound.  
 Sudden at Hector's side Apollo stood,  
 Like Phænops, Asius' son, appear'd the god ; 655  
 (Asius the great, who held his wealthy reign  
 In fair Abydos, by the rolling main.)

*nest of a fly.* There is no impropriety in the comparison, this animal being, of all others, the most persevering in its attacks, and the most difficult to be beaten off : the occasion also of the comparison being the resolute persistence of Menelaus about the dead body, renders it still the more just. But our present idea of the fly is indeed very low, as taken from the littleness and insignificance of this creature. However, since there is really no meaness in it, there ought to be none in expressing it ; and I have done my best in the translation to keep up the dignity of my author.

v. 651. *By Hector lov'd, his comrade, and his guest.*] Podes the favourite and companion of Hector being killed on this occasion, seems a parallel circumstance to the death of Achilles' favourite and companion ; and was probably put in here on purpose to engage Hector on the like occasion with Achilles.



Oh prince, he cry'd, oh foremost once in fame !  
 What Grecian now shall tremble at thy name ?  
 Dost thou at length, to Menelaus yield,      660  
 A chief once thought no terror to the field ;  
 Yet singly, now, the long-disputed prize  
 He bears victorious, while our army flies.  
 By the same illustrious arm Podes bled,  
 The friend of Hector, unreveng'd, is dead !      665  
 This heard, o'er Hector spreads a cloud of woe,  
 Rage lifts his lance, and drives him on the foe.

But now th' Eternal shook his sable shield,  
 That shaded Ide, and all the subject field  
 Beneath its ample verge.      A rolling cloud      670  
 Involv'd the mount ; the thunder roar'd aloud ;  
 Th' affrighted hills from their foundations nod,  
 And blaze beneath the lightnings of the god :  
 At one regard of his all-seeing eye,  
 The vanquish'd triumph, and the victors fly.      675

Then trembled Greece : the flight Peneleus led ;  
 For as the brave Bœotian turn'd his head  
 To face the foe, Polydamas drew near,  
 And raz'd his shoulder with a shorten'd spear :  
 By Hector wounded, Leitus quits the plain,      680  
 Pierc'd thro' the wrist ; and raging with the pain,  
 Grasps his once formidable lance in vain.      }

As Hector follow'd, Idomen address'd  
 The flaming jav'lin to his manly breast ;

The brittle point before his corselet yields ; 685

Exulting Troy with clamour fills the fields :

High on his chariot as the Cretan stood,

The son of Priam whirl'd the missive wood ;

But erring from its aim, th' impetuous spear

Strook to the dust the 'squire and charioteer 690

Of martial Merion : Cœranus his name,

Who left fair Lyctus for the fields of fame.

On foot bold Merion fought ; and now laid low,

He grac'd the triumphs of his Trojan foe ;

But the brave 'squire the ready coursers brought, 695

And with his life his master's safety bought.

Between his cheek and ear the weapon went,

The teeth it shatter'd, and the tongue it rent.

Prone from the feat he tumbles to the plain ;

His dying hand forgets the falling rein : 700

This Merion reaches, bending from the car,

And urges to desert the hopeless war ;

Idomeneus consents ; the lash applies ;

And the swift chariot to the navy flies.

Nor Ajax less the will of heav'n descry'd, 705

And conquest shifting to the Trojan side,

Turn'd by the hand of Jove. Then thus begun,

To Atreus' seed, the godlike Telamon.

Alas ! who sees not Jove's almighty hand

Transfers the glory to the Trojan band ? 710

Whether the weak or strong discharge the dart,

He guides each arrow to a Grecian heart :

Not so our spears: incessant though they rain,  
He suffers ev'ry lance to fall in vain.

Deserted of the God, yet let us try 715

What human strength and prudence can supply;

If yet this honour'd corse, in triumph borne,

May glad the fleets that hope not our return,

Who tremble yet, scarce rescu'd from their fates,

And still hear Hector thund'ring at their gates. 720

Some hero too must be dispatch'd to bear

The mournful message to Pelides' ear;

For sure he knows not, distant on the shore,

His friend, his lov'd Patroclus, is no more.

But such a chief I spy not through the host: 725

The men, the steeds, the armies, all are lost

In gen'ral darkness—Lord of earth and air!

Oh king! oh father! hear my humble pray'r:

Dispel this cloud, the light of heav'n restore;

Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more: 730

v. 721. *Some hero too must be dispatch'd, etc.*] It seems odd, that they did not sooner send this message to Achilles; but there is some apology for it from the darkness, and the difficulty of finding a proper person. It was not every body that was proper to send, but one who was a particular friend to Achilles, who might console with him. Such was Antilochus who is sent afterwards, and who, besides, had that necessary qualification of being *πρόδας ἀνὴρ*. Eustathius.

If Greece must perish, we thy will obey,

But let us perish in the face of day !

v. 731. *If Greece must perish, we thy will obey ;*

*But let us perish in the face of day !*

This thought has been looked upon as one of the sublimest in Homer. Longinus represents it in this manner :

“ The thickest darkness had on a sudden covered the

“ Grecian army and hindered them from fighting : when

“ Ajax, not knowing what course to take, cries out, *Oh*

“ *Jove ! disperse this darkness which covers the Greeks,*

“ *and if we must perish let us perish in the light !*

“ This is a sentiment truly worthy of Ajax, he does not

“ pray for life ; that had been unworthy a hero : but

“ because in that darkness he could not employ his valour

“ to any glorious purpose, and vexed to stand idle in the

“ field of battle, he only prays that the day may appear,

“ as being assured of putting an end to it worthy his

“ great heart, though Jupiter himself should happen to

“ oppose his efforts.”

M. l' Abbe Teraſſon, in his dissertation on the Iliad, endeavours to prove that Longinus has misrepresented the whole context and sense of this passage of Homer. The fact, says he, is, that Ajax is in a very different situation in Homer from that wherein Longinus describes him. He has not the least intention of fighting, he thinks only of finding out some fit person to send to Achilles ; and this darkness hindering him from seeing such a one, is the occasion of his prayer. Accordingly it appears, by what follows, that as soon as Jupiter had dispersed the cloud, Ajax never falls upon the enemy, but in consequence of his former thought orders Menelaus to look for Antilochus, to dispatch him to Achilles with the news of the death of his friend. Longinus, continues this author, had certainly forgot the place from whence he took this thought ; and it is not the first citation from Homer which the ancients have quot-

With tears the hero spoke, and at his pray'r  
The god relenting, clear'd the clouded air ;

ed wrong. Thus Aristotle attributes to Calypso, the words of Ulysses in the twelfth book of the Odyssæy ; and confounds together two passages, one of the second, the other of the fifteenth book of the Iliad. [Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 2. c. 9. and l. 3. c. 11.] And thus Cicero ascribed to Agamemnon a long discourse of Ulysses in the second Iliad ; [De Divinatione, l. 2.] and cited as Ajax's, the speech of Hector in the seventh. [See Aul. Gellius, l. 15. c. 6.] One has no cause to wonder at this, since the ancients having Homer almost by heart, were for that very reason the more subject to mistake in citing him by memory.

To this I think one may answer, that granting it was partly the occasion of Ajax's prayer to obtain light, in order to send to Achilles, which he afterwards does, yet the thought which Longinus attributes to him, is very consistent with it ; and the last line expresses nothing else but an heroic desire rather to die in the light, than escape with safety in the darkness.

Ἐν δὲ φάει καὶ ὀλεσθῶν, ἔπεινύ τοι ἔυδεν ἕτος.

But indeed the whole speech is only meant to paint the concern and distress of a brave general ; the thought of sending a messenger is only a result from that concern and distress, and so but a small circumstance, which cannot be said to occasion the prayer.

Mons. Boileau has translated this passage in two lines.

*Grand Dieu ! chasse la nuit qui nous couvre les yeux,  
Et combats contre nous a la clarte des cieux.*

And Mr. la Motte yet better in one,

*Grand Dieu ! rends nous le jour, et combats contre nous !*

But both these, as Dacier very justly observes, are con-

Forth burst the sun with all enlight'ning ray; 735  
 The blaze of armour flash'd against the day.  
 Now, now, Atrides! cast around thy sight,  
 If yet Antilochus survives the fight,  
 Let him to great Achilles' ear convey  
 The fatal news——Atrides hastes away. 740

So turns the lion from the nightly fold,  
 Though high in courage, and with hunger bold,  
 Long gall'd by herds-men, and long vex'd by hounds,  
 Stiff with fatigue, and fretted sore with wounds;  
 The darts fly round him from an hundred hands, 745  
 And the red terrors of the blazing brands:  
 'Till late, reluctant, at the dawn of day  
 Sour he departs, and quits th' untasted prey.  
 So mov'd Atrides from his dang'rous place;  
 With weary limbs, but with unwilling pace; 750  
 The foe, he fear'd, might yet Patroclus gain,  
 And much admonish'd, much adjur'd his train.

Oh guard these relics to your charge consign'd,  
 And bear the merits of the dead in mind;

trary to Homer's sense. He is far from representing Ajax of such a daring impiety, as to bid Jupiter combat against him; but only makes him ask for light, that if it be his will the Greeks shall perish, they may perish in open day. *Καὶ ὀλεσθον*——says he; that is, *abandon us, withdraw from us your assistance*; for those who are deserted by Jove must perish infallibly. This decorum of Homer ought to have been preserved.



How skill'd he was in each obliging art; 755

The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart:

He was, alas ! but fate decreed his end ;

In death a hero, as in life a friend !

So parts the chief ; from rank to rank he flew,  
And round on all sides sent his piercing view. 560

As the bold bird, endu'd with sharpest eye

Of all that wing the mid aerial sky,

The sacred eagle, from his walks above

Looks down, and sees the distant thicket move ;

Then stoops, and fousing on the quiv'ring hare, 765

Snatches his life amid the clouds of air.

Not with less quickness, his exerted sight

Pass'd this, and that way, through the ranks of fight :

'Till on the left the chief he sought, he found ;

Chearing his men, and spreading deaths around. 770

To him the king. Belov'd of Jove ! draw near,

For sadder tidings never touch'd thy ear ;

Thy eyes have witness'd what a fatal turn !

How Ilion triumphs, and th'Achaians mourn,

v. 756. *The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart.*] This is a fine elogium of Patroclus : Homer dwells upon it on purpose, lest Achilles's character should be mistaken ; and shews by the praises he bestows here upon goodness, that Achilles's character is not commendable for morality. Achilles's manners, intirely opposite to those of Patroclus, are not morally good ; they are only poetically so, that is to say, they were well marked ; and discover before-hand what resolutions that hero will take : as hath been at large explained upon Aristotle's Poetics. Dacier.

This is not all : Patroclus on the shore 775

Now pale and dead, shall succour Greece no more ;

Fly to the fleet, this instant fly, and tell

The sad Achilles how his lov'd one fell :

He too may haste the naked corps to gain ;

The arms are Hector's, who despoil'd the slain. 780

The youthful warrior heard with silent woe,

From his fair eyes the tears began to flow ;

Big with the mighty grief, he strove to say

What sorrow dictates, but no word found way.

To brave Laodocus his arms he flung, 785

Who near him wheeling, drove his steeds along ;

Then ran, the mournful message to impart,

With tear-ful eyes, and with dejected heart.

Swift fled the youth : nor Menelaus stands,

Though sore distressed, to aid the Pylian bands, 790

But bids bold Thrasymed those troops sustain ;

Himself returns to his Patroclus slain.

v. 781. *The youthful warrior heard with silent woe.* ]

Homer ever represents an excess of grief by a deep horror, silence, weeping, and not enquiring into the manner of the friend's death : nor could Antilochus have expressed his sorrow in any manner so moving as silence. Eustathius.

v. 785. *To brave Laodocus his arms he flung.* ] Antilochus leaves his armour, not only that he might make the more haste, but, as the ancients conjecture, that he might not be thought to be absent by the enemies ; and that seeing his armour on some other person, they might think him still in the fight. Eustathius.

Gone is Antilochus, the hero said,

But hope not, warriors, for Achilles' aid :

Though fierce his rage, unbounded be his woe, 795

Unarm'd, he fights not with the Trojan foe.

'Tis in our hands alone our hopes remain,

'Tis our own vigour must the dead regain,

And save ourselves, while with impetuous hate

Troy pours along, and this way rolls our fate. 800

'Tis well, said Ajax, be it then thy care

With Merion's aid, the weighty corse to rear ;

Myself and my bold brother will sustain

The shock of Hector and his charging train :

Nor fear we armies, fighting side by side ; 805

What Troy can dare, we have already try'd,

Have try'd it, and have stood. The hero said.

High from the ground the warriors heave the dead.

A gen'ral clamour rises at the fight :

Loud shout the Trojans, and renew the fight. 810

Not fiercer rush along the gloomy wood,

With rage insatiate and with thirst of blood,

Voracious hounds, that many a length before

Their furious hunters, drive the wounded boar ;

But if the savage turns his glaring eye, 815

They howl aloof, and round the forest fly

v. 794. *But hope not, warriors, for Achilles' aid!*

*Unarm'd——]*

This is an ingenious way of making the valour of Achilles appear the greater ; who, though without arms, goes forth, in the next book, contrary to the expectation of Ajax and Menelaus. Dacier.

Thus on retreating Greece the Trojans pour,  
 Wave their thick faulchions, and their jav'lines show'r:  
 But Ajax turning, to their fears they yield,  
 All pale they tremble, and forsake the field. 820

While thus aloft the hero's corse they bear,  
 Behind them rages all the storm of war;  
 Confusion, tumult, horror, o'er the throng  
 Of men, steeds, chariots, urg'd the rout along:  
 Lefs fierce the winds with rising flames conspire, 825  
 To whelm some city under waves of fire;  
 Now sink in gloomy clouds the proud abodes;  
 Now crack the blazing temples of the gods;

v. 825, etc.] The heap of images which Homer throws together at the end of this book, makes the same action appear with a very beautiful variety. The description of the burning of a city is short, but very lively. That of Ajax alone bringing up the rear-guard, and shielding those that bore the body of Patroclus from the whole Trojan host, gives a prodigious idea of Ajax, and as Homer has often hinted, makes him just second to Achilles. The image of the beam paints the great stature of Patroclus: that of the hill dividing the stream is noble and natural.

He compares the Ajaces to a boar, for their fierceness and boldness; to a long bank that keeps off the course of the waters, for their standing firm and immoveable in the battle: those that carry the dead body, to mules dragging a vast beam through rugged paths, for their laboriousness: the body carried, to a beam, for being heavy and inanimate: the Trojans to dogs, for their boldness; and to water, for their agility and moving backwards and forwards: the Greeks to a flight of starlings and jays, for their timorousness and swiftness. Eustathius.

The rumbling torrent through the ruin rolls,  
 And sheets of smoke mount heavy to the poles. 830  
 The heroes sweat beneath their honour'd load:  
 As when two mules, along the rugged road,  
 From the steep mountain with exerted strength  
 Drag some vast beam, or mast's unwieldy length;  
 Inly they groan, big drops of sweat distill, 835  
 Th' enormous timber lumb'ring down the hill:  
 So these——Behind, the bulk of Ajax stands,  
 And breaks the torrent of the rushing bands.  
 Thus when a river swell'd with sudden rains  
 Spreads his broad waters o'er the level plains, 840  
 Some interposing hill the stream divides,  
 And breaks its force, and turns the winding tides.  
 Still close they follow, close the rear engage;  
 Æneas storms, and Hector foams with rage:  
 While Greece a heavy, thick retreat maintains, 845  
 Wedg'd in one body, like a flight of cranes,  
 That shriek incessant while the falcon hung  
 High on pois'd pinions, threats their callow young,  
 So from the Trojan chiefs the Grecians fly,  
 Such the wild terror, and the mingled cry: 850  
 Within, without the trench, and all the way,  
 Strow'd in bright heaps, their arms and armour lay:  
 Such horror Jove impress! Yet still proceeds  
 The work of death, and still the battle bleeds.





T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K XVIII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The grief of Achilles, and new armour made him by Vulcan.

*THE news of the death of Patroclus is brought to Achilles by Antilochus. Thetis hearing his lamentations, comes with all her sea-nymphs to comfort him. The speeches of the mother and son on this occasion. Iris appears to Achilles by the command of Juno, and orders him to shew himself at the head of the entrenchments. The sight of him turns the fortune of the day, and the body of Patroclus is carried off by the Greeks. The Trojans call a council, where Hector and Polydamas disagree in their opinions; but the advice of the former prevails, to remain encamped in the field: the grief of Achilles over the body of Patroclus.*

*Thetis goes to the palace of Vulcan to obtain new arms for her son. The description of the wonderful works of Vulcan; and lastly, that noble one of the shield of Achilles.*

The latter part of the nine and twentieth day, and the night ensuing, take up this book. The scene is at Achilles's tent on the sea-shore, from whence it changes to the palace of Vulcan.

**T**HUS like the rage of fire the combate burns,  
And now it rises, now it sinks by turns.

v. 1. *Thus like the rage of fire, etc.*] This phrase is usual in our author, to signify a sharp battle fought with

Meanwhile, where Hellespont's broad waters flow,

Stood Nestor's son, the messenger of woe:

There fate Achilles, shaded by his sails, 5

On hoisted yards extended to the gales;

Pensive he fate; for all that fate design'd

Rose in sad prospect to his boding mind.

Thus to his soul he said. Ah what constrains

The Greeks, late victors, now to quit the plains? 10

heat and fury on both parts; such an engagement like a flame, preying upon all sides, and dying the sooner, the fiercer it burns. Eustathius.

v. 6. *On hoisted yards.*] The epithet *ὀρθοκραυίδων* in this place has a more than ordinary signification. It implies that the sail yards were hoisted up, and Achilles's ships on the point to set sail. This shews that it was purely in compliance to his friend that he permitted him to succour the Greeks; he meant to leave them as soon as Patroclus returned; he still remembered what he told the ambassadors in the ninth book; v. 360. *To-morrow you shall see my fleet set sail.* Accordingly this is the day appointed, and he is fixed to his resolution: this circumstance wonderfully strengthens his implacable character.

v. 7. *Pensive he fate.*] Homer in this artful manner prepares Achilles for the fatal message, and gives him these forebodings of his misfortunes, that they might be no less than he expected.

His expressions are suitable to his concern, and delivered confusedly. "I bade him, says he, after he had saved the ships, and repulsed the Trojans, to return back, and not engage himself too far." Here he breaks off, when he should have added; "But he was so unfortunate as to forget my advice." As he is reasoning with himself, Antilochus comes in, which makes him leave the sense imperfect. Eustathius.

Is this the day, which heav'n so long ago  
 Ordain'd, to sink me with the weight of woe?  
 So Thetis warn'd, when by a Trojan hand  
 The bravest of the Myrmidonian band  
 Should lose the light? fulfill'd is that decree; 15  
 Fall'n is the warrior, and Patroclus he!

In vain I charg'd him soon to quit the plain,  
 And warn'd to shun Hectorean force in vain!

Thus while he thinks, Antilochus appears,  
 And tells the melancholy tale with tears. 20  
 Sad tidings, son of Peleus! thou must hear;  
 And wretched I, th' unwilling messenger!

v. 15.—*Fulfill'd is that decree;*

*Slain is the warrior, and Patroclus he!*

It may be objected, that Achilles seems to contradict what had been said in the foregoing book, that Thetis concealed from her son the death of Patroclus in her prediction. Whereas here he says, that she had foretold he should lose the bravest of the Thessalians. There is nothing in this but what is natural and common among mankind: and it is still more agreeable to the hasty and inconsiderate temper of Achilles not to have made that reflection till it was too late. Prophecies are only marks of divine prescience, not warnings to prevent human misfortunes; for if they were, they must hinder their own accomplishment.

v. 21. *Sad tidings, son of Peleus!]* This speech of Antilochus ought to serve us a model for the brevity with which so dreadful a piece of news ought to be delivered; for in two verses it comprehends the whole affair of the death of Patroclus, the person that killed him, the contest for his body, and his arms in the possession of his enemy. Besides, it should be observed that grief has

Dead is Patroclus ! For his corse they fight ;  
His naked corse ; his arms are Hector's right.

A sudden horror shot through all the chief, 25  
And wrapt his senses in a cloud of grief ;

so crowded his words, that in these two verses he leaves the verb ἀρπυμάχονται, *they fight*, without its nominative, *the Greeks or Trojans*. Homer observes this brevity upon all the like occasions. The Greek tragic poets have not always imitated this discretion. In great distresses there is nothing more ridiculous than a messenger who begins a long story with pathetic descriptions ; he speaks without being heard ; for the person to whom he addresses himself has no time to attend him : the first word, which discovers to him his misfortune, has made him deaf to all the rest. Eustathius.

v. 25. *A sudden horror, etc.*] A modern French writer has drawn a parallel of the conduct of Homer and Virgil, in relation to the deaths of Patroclus and of Pallas. The latter is killed by Turnus, as the former by Hector ; Turnus triumphs in the spoils of the one, as Hector is clad in the arms of the other ; Æneas revenges the death of Pallas by that of Turnus, as Achilles the death of Patroclus by that of Hector. The grief of Achilles in Homer, on the score of Patroclus, is much greater than that of Æneas in Virgil for the sake of Pallas. Achilles gives himself up to despair, with a weakness which Plato could not pardon in him, and which can only be excused on account of the long and close friendship between them : that of Æneas is more discreet, and seems more worthy of a hero. It was not possible that Æneas could be so deeply interested for any man as Achilles was interested for Patroclus : for Virgil had no colour to kill Ascanius, who was little more than a child ; besides, that his hero's interest in the war of Italy was great enough of itself, not to need to be ani-

Cast on the ground, with furious hands he spread  
The scorching ashes o'er his graceful head ;  
His purple garments, and his golden hairs,  
Those he deforms with dust, and these he tears :      30  
On the hard soil his groaning breast he threw,  
And roll'd and grovel'd, as to earth he grew.

inated by so touching a concern as the fear of losing his son. On the other hand, Achilles having but very little personal concern in the war of Troy (as he had told Agamemnon in the beginning of the poem) and knowing, besides, that he was to perish there, required some very pressing motive to engage him to persist in it, after such disgusts and insults as he had received. It was this which made it necessary for those two great poets to treat a subject so much in its own nature alike, in a manner so different. But as Virgil found it admirable in Homer, he was willing to approach it, as near as the œconomy of his work would permit.

v. 27. *Cast on the ground, etc.*] This is a fine picture of the grief of Achilles: we see on the one hand, the posture in which the hero receives the news of his friend's death; he falls upon the ground, he rends his hair, he snatches the ashes and casts them on his head, according to the manner of those times; (but what much enlivens it in this place, is his sprinkling embers, instead of ashes, in the violence of his passion.) On the other side, the captives are running from their tents, ranging themselves about him, and answering to his groans: beside him stands Antilochus, fetching deep sighs, and hanging on the arms of the hero, for fear his despair and rage should cause some desperate attempt upon his own life: there is no painter but will be touched with this image.



The virgin captives, with disorder'd charms,  
 (Won by his own, or by Patroclus' arms)  
 Rush'd from the tents with cries; and gath'ring round,  
 Beat their white breasts, and fainted on the ground: 36  
 While Nestor's son sustains a manlier part,  
 And mourns the warrior with a warrior's heart;  
 Hangs on his arms, amidst his frantic woe,  
 And oft prevents the meditated blow. 40

Far in the deep abysses of the main,  
 With hoary Nereus, and the watry train,  
 The mother goddess from her crystal throne  
 Heard his loud cries, and answer'd groan for groan.  
 The circling Nereids with their mistress weep, 45  
 And all the sea-green sisters of the deep.  
 Thalia, Glaucus, ev'ry wat'ry name,  
 Nereæa mild, and silver Spio came:  
 Cymothoe and Cymodoce were nigh,  
 And the blue languish of soft Alia's eye. 50  
 Their locks Actæa and Limnoria rear,  
 Then Proto, Doris, Panope appear,  
 Thoa, Pherusa, Doto, Melita;  
 Agave gentle, and Ampithoe gay:  
 Next Callianira, Callianassa show 55  
 Their sister looks; Dexamene the slow,

v. 33. *The virgin captives.*] The captive maids lamented either in pity for their lord, or in gratitude to the memory of Patroclus, who was remarkable for his goodness and affability; or under these pretences mourned for their own misfortunes and slavery. Eustathius.



And swift Dynamene, now cut the tides :

Iæra now the verdant wave divides :

Nemertes with Apseudes lifts the head,

Bright Galatea quits her pearly bed :

60

These Orythia, Clymene, attend,

Mæra, Amphinome, the train extend.

And black Janira, and Janassa fair,

And Amatheia with her amber hair.

All these, and all that deep in Ocean held

65

Their sacred seats, the glimm'ring grotto fill'd ;

Each beat her iv'ry breast with silent woe,

'Till Thetis' sorrows thus began to flow.

Hear me, and judge, ye sisters of the main ?

How just a cause has Thetis to complain ?

70

How wretched, were I mortal, were my fate !

How more than wretched in th' immortal state !

Sprung from my bed a godlike hero came,

The bravest far that ever bore the name ;

Like some fair olive, by my careful hand

75

He grew, he flourish'd, and adorn'd the land ;

To Troy I sent him ; but the fates ordain

He never, never must return again.

So short a space the light of heav'n to view,

So short, alas ! and fill'd with anguish too.

80

v. 75. *Like some fair olive, by my careful hand.*]

This passage, where the mother compares her son to a tender plant, raised and preserved with care ; has a

most remarkable resemblance to that in the psalms,

*Thy children like branches of olive trees round thy table.*

Psalms cxxvii.

Hear how his sorrows echo through the shore !

I cannot ease them, but I must deplore ;

I go at least to bear a tender part,

And mourn my lov'd one with a mother's heart.

She said, and left the caverns of the main, 85

All bath'd in tears, the melancholy train

Attend her way. Wide-opening part the tides,

While the long pomp the silver wave divides.

Approaching now, they touch'd the Trojan land ;

Then, two by two, ascended up the strand. 90

Th'immortal mother, standing close beside

Her mournful offspring, to his sighs reply'd ;

Along the coast their mingled clamours ran,

And thus the silver-footed dame began.

Why mourns my son ? thy late prefer'd request 95

The god has granted, and the Greeks distress :

Why mourns my son ? thy anguish let me share,

Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care.

He, deeply groaning——To this cureless grief

Not ev'n the thund'rer's favour brings relief. 100

Patroclus——Ah !——say, goddess, can I boast

A pleasure now ; revenge itself is lost ;

Patroclus, lov'd of all my martial train,

Beyond mankind, beyond myself, is slain !

Lost are those arms the gods themselves bestow'd 105

On Peleus ; Hector bears the glorious load.

Curs'd be that day, when all the pow'rs above

Thy charms submitted to a mortal love :

Oh had'st thou still, a sister of the main,  
 Pursu'd the pleasures of the wat'ry reign; 110  
 And happier Pèleus, less ambitious, led  
 A mortal beauty to his equal bed !  
 Ere the sad fruit of thy unhappy womb  
 Had caus'd such sorrows past, and woes to come.  
 For soon, alas ! that wretched offspring slain, 115  
 New woes, new sorrows shall create again.  
 'Tis not in fate th' alternate now to give ;  
 Patroclus dead, Achilles hates to live.  
 Let me revenge it on proud Hector's heart,  
 Let his last spirit smoke upon my dart ; 120  
 On these conditions will I breathe : till then,  
 I blush to walk among the race of men.  
 A flood of tears, at this, the goddess shed,  
 Ah then, I see thee dying, see thee dead !

v. 100. 125. *The two speeches of Achilles to Thetis.*]

It is not possible to imagine more lively and beautiful strokes of nature and passion, than those which our author ascribes to Achilles throughout these admirable speeches. They contain all that the truest friend, the most tender son, and the most generous hero, could think or express in this delicate and affecting circumstance. He shews his excess of love to his mother, by wishing he had never been born or known to the world, rather than she should have endured so many sufferings on his account : he shews no less love for his friend, in resolving to revenge his death upon Hector, though his own would immediately follow. We see him here ready to meet his fate for the sake of his friend, and in the *Odyssèy* we find him wishing to live again, only to maintain his father's honour against his enemies. Thus he va-

When Hector falls, thou dy'st.—Let Hector die, 125  
 And let me fall ! Achilles made reply.  
 Far lies Patroclus from his native plain !  
 He fell, and falling, wish'd my aid in vain.  
 Ah then, since from this miserable day  
 I cast all hope of my return away, 130  
 Since unreveng'd, a hundred ghosts demand  
 The fate of Hector from Achilles' hand ;  
 Since here, for brutal courage far renown'd,  
 I live an idle burden to the ground,  
 (Others in council fam'd for nobler skill, 135  
 More useful to preserve, than I to kill)  
 Let me—But oh ! ye gracious pow'rs above !  
 Wrath and revenge from men and gods remove :

lues neither life nor death, but as they conduce to the good of his friend and parents, or the encrease of his glory.

After having calmly considered the present state of his life, he deliberately embraces his approaching fate ; and comforts himself under it, by a reflection on those great men, whom neither their illustrious actions, nor their affinity to heaven, could save from the general doom. A thought very natural to him, whose business it was in peace to sing their praises, and in war to imitate their actions. Achilles, like a man passionate of glory, takes none but the finest models ; he thinks of Hercules, who was the son of Jupiter, and who had filled the universe with the noise of his immortal actions ; these are the sentiments of a real hero. Eustathius.

v. 137. *Let me—But oh ! ye gracious pow'rs, etc.]*  
 Achilles's words are these ; “ Now since I am never to  
 “ return home, and since I lie here an useless person,  
 losing

Far, far too dear to ev'ry mortal breast,  
 Sweet to the soul, as honey to the taste; 140  
 Gath'ring like vapours of a noxious kind  
 From fiery blood, and dark'ning all the mind.  
 Me Agamemnon urg'd to deadly hate;  
 'Tis past — I quell it; I resign to fate.  
 Yes—I will meet the murd'rer of my friend; 145  
 Or, if the gods ordain it, meet my end.  
 The stroke of fate the bravest cannot shun;  
 The great Alcides, Jove's unequal'd son,  
 To Juno's hate at length resign'd his breath,  
 And sunk the victim of all-conqu'ring death. 150

“losing my best friend, and exposing the Greeks to so  
 “many dangers by my own folly; I who am superior  
 “to them all in battle — Here he breaks off, and says,  
 —May contention perish everlastingly, etc. Achilles  
 leaves the sentence thus suspended, either because in  
 his heat he had forgot what he was speaking of, or be-  
 cause he did not know how to end it; for he should  
 have said, — “Since I have done all this, I will pe-  
 “rish to revenge him:” nothing can be finer than this  
 sudden execration against discord and revenge, which  
 breaks from the hero in the deep sense of the miseries  
 those passions had occasioned.

Achilles could not be ignorant that he was superior  
 to others in battle; and it was therefore no fault in him  
 to say so. But he is so ingenuous as to give himself no  
 farther commendation than what he undoubtedly merited;  
 confessing, at the same time, that many exceeded  
 him in speaking: unless one may take this as said in con-  
 tempt of oratory, not unlike that of Virgil,

*Orabunt causas melius ——— etc.*

So shall Achilles fall ! stretch'd pale and dead,  
 No more the Grecian hope, or Trojan dread !  
 Let me, this instant, rush into the fields,  
 And reap what glory life's short harvest yields.  
 Shall I not force some widow'd dame to tear 155  
 With frantic hands, her long-dishevel'd hair ?  
 Shall I not force her breast to heave with sighs,  
 And the soft tears to trickle from her eyes !  
 Yes, I shall give the fair those mournful charms —  
 In vain you hold me — Hence ! my arms, my arms !  
 Soon shall the sanguine torrent spread so wide, 161  
 That all shall know, Achilles swells the tide.

My son (Cœrulean Thetis made reply,  
 To fate submitting with a secret sigh)  
 The host to succour, and thy friends to save, 165  
 Is worthy thee ; the duty of the brave.  
 But can'st thou, naked, issue to the plains ?  
 Thy radiant arms the Trojan foe detains.  
 Insulting Hector bears the spoils on high,  
 But vainly glories, for his fate is nigh. 170

v. 153. *Let me this instant.*] I shall have time enough for inglorious rest when I am in the grave, but now I must act like a living hero : I shall indeed lie down in death, but at the same time rise higher in glory. Eustathius.

v. 162. *That all shall know, Achilles.*] There is a great stress on *ἀνθρώπων* and *εἰς*. They shall soon find that their victories have been owing to the *long absence* of a hero, and that hero Achilles. Upon which the ancients have observed, that since Achilles's anger there



Yet, yet awhile, thy gen'rous ardour stay ;  
 Assur'd, I meet thee at the dawn of day,  
 Charg'd with refulgent arms, a glorious load,  
 Vulcanian arms, the labour of a god.

Then turning to the daughters of the main, 175  
 The goddess thus dismiss'd her azure train.

Ye sister Nereids ! to your deeps descend,  
 Hasten, and our father's sacred seat attend,  
 I go to find the architect divine,  
 Where vast Olympus' starry summits shine : 180  
 So tell our hoary sire — This charge she gave :  
 The sea-green sisters plunge beneath the wave :  
 Thetis once more ascends the blest abodes,  
 And treads the brazen threshold of the gods.

And now the Greeks, from furious Hector's force,  
 Urge to broad Hellespont their headlong course : 186

past in reality but a few days : to which it may be replied, that so short a time as this might well seem long to Achilles, who thought all unactive hours tedious and insupportable ; and if the poet himself had said that Achilles was long absent, he had not said it because a great many days had past, but because so great a variety of incidents had happened in that time. Eustathius.

v. 171. ——— This promise of Thetis to present her son with a suit of armour, was the most artful method of hindering him from putting immediately in practice his resolution of fighting, which according to his violent manners, he must have done : therefore the interposition of Thetis here was absolutely necessary ; it was *dignus vindice nodus*.

Nor yet their chiefs Patroclus' body bore  
Safe through the tempest to the tented shore.  
The horse, the foot, with equal fury join'd,  
Pour'd on the rear, and thunder'd close behind ; 190  
And like a flame through fields of ripen'd corn,  
The rage of Hector o'er the ranks was born.  
Thrice the slain hero by the foot he drew ;  
Thrice to the skies the Trojan clamours flew :  
As oft th' Ajaces his assault sustain ; 195  
But check'd, he turns ; repuls'd, attacks again.  
With fiercer shouts his ling'ring troops he fires,  
Nor yields a step, nor from his post retires ;  
So watchful shepherds strive to force, in vain,  
The hungry lion from a carcase slain. 205  
Ev'n yet Patroclus had he born away,  
And all the glories of th' extended day :  
Had not high Juno, from the realms of air,  
Secret, dispatch'd her trusty messenger.  
The various goddess of the show'ry bow, 200  
Shot in a whirlwind to the shore below,  
To great Achilles at his ships she came,  
And thus began the many-colour'd dame,  
Rise, son of Peleus ! rise divinely brave !  
Assist the combat, and Patroclus save : 210  
For him the slaughter to the fleet they spread,  
And fall by mutual wounds around the dead.  
To drag him back to Troy the foe contends :  
Nor with his death the rage of Hector ends :

A prey to dogs he dooms the corse to lie, 215

And marks the place to fix his head on high.

Rife, and prevent, if yet you think of fame,

Thy friend's disgrace, thy own eternal shame!

Who sends thee, goddess! from th' ethereal skies?

Achilles thus. And Iris thus replies. 220

I come, Pelides! from the queen of Jove,

Th' immortal empress of the realms above.

Unknown to him who sits remote on high,

Unknown to all the synod of the sky.

Thou com'st in vain, he cries, with fury warm'd, 225

Arms I have none, and can I fight unarm'd?

v. 219. *Who sends thee, goddess, etc.*] Achilles is amazed, that a moment after the goddess his mother had forbid him fighting, he should receive a contrary order from the gods; therefore he asks, what god sent her? Dacier.

v. 226. *Arms I have none.*] It is here objected against Homer, that since Patroclus took Achilles's armour, Achilles could not want arms while he had those of Patroclus; but (besides that Patroclus might have given his armour to his squire Automedon; the better to deceive the Trojans by making them take Automedon for Patroclus, as they took Patroclus for Achilles) this objection may be very solidly answered by saying that Homer has prevented it, since he made Achilles's armour fit Patroclus's body not without a miracle, which the gods wrought in his favour. Furthermore it does not follow, that because the armour of a large man fits one that is smaller, the armour of a little man should fit one that is larger. Eustathius.

Unwilling as I am, of force I stay,

'Till Thetis bring me at the dawn of day

Vulcanian arms : what other can I wield ?

Except the mighty Telamonian shield ?

230

That, in my friend's defence, has Ajax spread,

While his strong lance around him heaps the dead :

The gallant chief defends Menœtius' son,

And does, what his Achilles should have done.

Thy want of arms, said Iris, well we know,

235

But though unarm'd, yet clad in terrors, go !

v. 230. *Except the mighty Telamonian shield.*] Achilles seems not to have been of so large a stature as Ajax : yet his shield, it is likely, might be fit enough for him, because his great strength was sufficient to wield it. This passage, I think, might have been made use of by the defenders of the shield of Achilles against the critics, to shew that Homer intended the buckler of his hero for a very large one : and one would think he put it into this place, just a little before the description of that shield, on purpose to obviate that objection.

v. 236. *But though unarm'd.*] A hero so violent and so outrageous as Achilles, and who had but just lost the man he loved best in the world, is not likely to refuse shewing himself to the enemy, for the single reason of having no armour. Grief and despair in a great soul are not so prudent and reserved ; but then, on the other side, he is not to throw himself into the midst of so many enemies armed and flushed with victory. Homer gets out of this nice circumstance with great dexterity, and gives to Achilles's character every thing he ought to give to it, without offending either against reason or probability. He judiciously feigns, that Juno sent this order to Achilles, for Juno is the goddess

Let but Achilles o'er yon' trench appear,  
 Proud Troy shall tremble, and consent to fear :  
 Greece from on glance of that tremendous eye,  
 Shall take new courage, and disdain to fly. 240

She spoke, and past in air. The hero rose ;  
 Her Ægis, Pallas o'er his shoulder throws ;  
 Around his brows a golden cloud she spread ;  
 A stream of glory flam'd above his head.  
 As when from some beleaguer'd town arise 245  
 The smokes, high-curling to the shaded skies ;

of royalty, who has the care of princes and kings ; and who inspires them with the sense of what they owe to their dignity and character. Dacier.

v. 237. *Let but Achilles o'er yon' trench appear.*] There cannot be a greater instance, how constantly Homer carried his whole design in his head, as well as with what admirable art he raises one great idea upon another, to the highest sublime, than this passage of Achilles's appearance to the army, and the preparations by which we are led to it. In the thirteenth book, when the Trojans have the victory, they check their pursuit of it in the mere thought that *Achilles sees them* : In the sixteenth, they are put into the utmost consternation at the sight of his armour and chariot : in the seventeenth, Menelaus and Ajax are in despair, on the consideration that Achilles cannot succour them for want of armour : in the present book, beyond all expectation he does but shew himself unarmed, and the very sight of him gives the victory to Greece ! How extremely noble is this gradation !

v. 246. *The smokes, high-curling.*] For fires in the day appear nothing but smoke, and in the night flames are visible because of the darkness. And thus it is said



(Seen from some island, o'er the main afar,  
 When men distressed hang out the sign of war)  
 Soon as the sun in ocean hides his rays,  
 Thick on the hills the flaming beacons blaze ; 250  
 With long-projected beams the seas are bright,  
 And heav'n's high arch reflects the ruddy light :  
 So from Achilles' head the splendors rise,  
 Reflecting blaze on blaze against the skies.  
 Forth march'd the chief, and distant from the croud,  
 High on the rampart rais'd his voice aloud ; 256  
 With her own shout Minerva swells the sound ;  
 Troy starts astonish'd, and the shores rebound.  
 As the loud trumpet's brazen mouth from far  
 With shrilling clangor sounds th' alarm of war, 260

in Exodus, 'That God led his people in the day with  
 ' a pillar of smoke, and in the night with a pillar of fire.'  
*Per diem in columna nubis, et per noctem in columna  
 ignis.* Dacier.

v. 247. *Seen from some island.*] Homer makes choice  
 of a town placed in an island, because such a place be-  
 ing besieged has no other means of making its distress  
 known than by signals of fire ; whereas a town upon  
 the continent has other means to make known to its  
 neighbours the necessity it is in. Dacier.

v. 259. *As the loud trumpet's, etc.*] I have already  
 observed, that when the poet speaks as from himself,  
 he may be allowed to take his comparisons from things  
 which were not known before his time. Here he bor-  
 rows a comparison from the trumpet, as he has else-  
 where done from saddle-horses, though neither one nor  
 the other were used in Greece at the time of the Trojan



Struck from the walls, the echoes float on high,  
 And the round bulwarks and thick tow'rs reply;  
 So high his brazen voice the hero rear'd:  
 Hosts drop their arms, and trembled as they heard;  
 And back the chariots roll, and courfers bound, 265  
 And steeds and men lie mingled on the ground.  
 Aghast they see the living light'nings play,  
 And turn their eye-balls from the flashing ray.  
 Thrice from the trench his dreadful voice he rais'd;  
 And thrice they fled, confounded and amaz'd. 270  
 Twelve in the tumult wedg'd, untimely rush'd  
 On their own spears, by their own chariots crush'd:  
 While shielded from the darts, the Greeks obtain  
 The long-contended carcase of the slain.

war. Virgil was less exact in this respect, for he describes the trumpet as used in the sacking of Troy:

*Exoritur clamorque virum clangorque tubarum.*

And celebrates Misenus as the trumpeter of Æneas. But as Virgil wrote at a time more remote from those heroic ages, perhaps this liberty may be excused. But a poet may better confine himself to customs and manners, like a painter; and it is equally a fault in either of them to ascribe to times and nations any thing with which they were unacquainted.

One may add an observation to this note of M. Dacier, that the trumpet's not being in use at that time, makes very much for Homer's purpose in this place. The terror raised by the voice of his hero, is much the more strongly imaged by a sound that was unusual, and capable of striking more from its very novelty.

A lofty bier the breathless warrior bears : 275

Around, his sad companions melt in tears.

But chief Achilles, bending down his head;

Pours unavailing sorrows o'er the dead.

Whom late triumphant with his steeds and car,

He sent refulgent to the field of war, 280

Unhappy change ! now senseless, pale, he found,

Stretch'd forth, and gash'd with many a gaping wound.

Meantime unweary'd with his heav'nly way,

In Ocean's waves th'unwilling light of day

Quench'd his red orb, at Juno's high command, 285

And from their labours eas'd th'Achaian band.

The frighted Trojans (panting from the war,

Their steeds unharness'd from the weary car)

A sudden council call'd : each chief appear'd

In haste, and standing, for to sit they fear'd. 290

'Twas now no season for prolong'd debate ;

They saw Achilles, and in him their fate.

Silent they stood : Polydamas at last,

Skill'd to discern the future by the past,

The son of Panthus, thus express'd his fears ; 295

{The friend of Hector, and of equal years :

The self-same night to both a being gave,

One wise in council, one in action brave.)

In free debate, my friends, your sentence speak ;

For me, I move, before the morning break, 300

To raise our camp : too dang'rous here our post,

Far from Troy walls, and on a naked coast.

I deem'd not Greece so dreadful, while engag'd  
 In mutual feuds, her king and hero rag'd ;  
 Then, while we hop'd our armies might prevail, 305  
 We boldly camp'd beside a thousand sail.  
 I dread Pelides now : his rage of mind  
 Not long continues to the shores confin'd,  
 Nor to the fields, where long in equal fray  
 Contending nations won and lost the day ; 310  
 For Troy, for Troy, shall henceforth be the strife,  
 And the hard contest not for fame, but life.  
 Haſte then to Ilion, while the fav'ring night  
 Detains thoſe terrors, keeps that arm from fight ;  
 If but the morrow's ſun behold us here, 315  
 That arm, thoſe terrors, we ſhall feel, not fear ;  
 And hearts that now diſdain, ſhall leap with joy,  
 If heav'n permits them then to enter Troy.  
 Let not my fatal prophecy be true,  
 Nor what I tremble, but to think, enſue. 320  
 Whatever be our fate, yet let us try  
 What force of thought and reaſon can ſupply ;

v. 315. *If but the morrow's ſun, etc.*] Polydamas ſays in the original, “ If Achilles comes to-morrow in “ his armour.” There ſeems to lie an objection againſt this paſſage, for Polydamas knew that Achilles's armour was won by Hector, he muſt alſo know, that no other man's armour would fit him ; how then could he know that new arms were made for him that very night ! Thoſe who are reſolved to defend Homer, may answer, it was by his ſkill in prophecy ; but to me this ſeems to be a ſlip of our author's memory, and one of thoſe little nods which Horace ſpeaks of.

Let us on counsel for our guard depend ;

The town, her gates and bulwarks shall defend.

When morning dawns, our well-appointed pow'rs, 325  
Array'd in arms, shall line the lofty tow'rs.

Let the fierce hero then, when fury calls,

Vent his mad vengeance on our rocky walls,

Or fetch a thousand circles round the plain,

Till his spent coursers seek the fleet again : 330

So may his rage be tir'd, and labour'd down ;

And dogs shall tear him ere he sack the town.

Return ! (said Hector, fir'd with stern disdain)

What coop whole armies in our walls again ?

v. 323. *The speech of Hector.*] Hector in this severe answer to Polydamas, takes up several of his words and turns them another way.

Polydamas had said, *Πρωὶ δ' ὑπ' ἡοίοι σὺν τεύχεσι θωρηχθέντες ἐπηόμειθ' ἂν πύργους,* " To-morrow by break of day let us put on our arms, and defend the castles and city walls ;" to which Hector replies, *Πρωὶ δ' ὑπ' ἡοίοι σὺν τεύχεσι θωρηχθέντες Πηυσὶν ἐπὶ γλαφυρῇσιν ἐγάρμεν ὅξυν' Ἀργεα,* " To-morrow by break of day let us put on our arms, not to defend ourselves at home, but to fight the Greeks before their own ships."

Polydamas, speaking of Achilles, had said, *τῷ δ' ἄλγιον αἶν' ἐθέλησιν,* etc. " If he comes after we are within the walls of our city, it will be the worse for him, for he may drive round the city long enough before he can hurt us." To which Hector answers, if Achilles should come, *Ἄλγιον, αἶν' ἐθέλησι, τῷ ἔσσεται ὅ μιν ἔγωγε Φεύξομαι ἐκ πολέμοιο,* etc. " It will be the worse for him as you say, -because I will fight him :"  
*ὅ μιν ἔγωγε Φεύξομαι,* says Hector, in reply to Polydamas's saying, *ὅς κε φύγη.* But Hector is not so far gone  
in

Was't not enough, ye valiant warriors, say, 335

Nine years imprison'd in those tow'rs ye lay?

Wide o'er the world was Ilion fam'd of old

For brass exhaustless, and for mines of gold:

But while inglorious in her walls we stay'd,

Sunk were her treasures, and her stores decay'd; 340

The Phrygians now her scatter'd spoils enjoy,

And proud Mæonia wafts the fruits of Troy.

Great Jove at length my arms to conquest calls,

And shuts the Grecians in their wooden walls:

Dar'st thou dispirit whom the gods incite? 345

Flies any Trojan? I shall stop his flight.

To better counsel then attention lend;

Take due refreshment, and the watch attend.

If there be one whose riches cost him care,

Forth let him bring them for the troops to share; 550

in passion or pride, as to forget himself; and accordingly in the next lines he modestly puts it in doubt, which of them shall conquer. Eustathius.

v. 340. *Sunk were her treasures, and her stores decay'd.*] As well by reason of the convoys, which were necessarily to be sent for with ready money; as by reason of the great allowances which were to be given to the auxiliary troops, who came from Phrygia and Mæonia. Hector's meaning is, that since all the riches of Troy are exhausted, it is no longer necessary to spare themselves, or shut themselves up within their walls. Dacier.

v. 349. *If there be one, etc.*] This noble and generous proposal is worthy of Hector, and at the same time very artful to ingratiate himself with the soldiers. Eustathius farther observes that it is said with an eye to Poly-

'Tis better gen'rously bestow'd on those,  
Than left the plunder of our country's foes.

Soon as the morn the purple orient warms,  
Fierce on yon' navy will we pour our arms.

If great Achilles rise in all his might, 355

His be the danger : I shall stand the fight.

Honour, ye gods ! or let me gain, or give ;

And live he glorious, whoso'er shall live !

Mars is our common lord, alike to all ;

And oft the victor triumphs, but to fall. 360

The shouting host in loud applauses join'd ;

So Pallas robb'd the many of their mind,

To their own sense condemn'd ! and left to chuse

The worst advice, the better to refuse.

While the long Night extends their sable reign, 365  
Around Patroclus mourn'd the Grecian train.

Stern in superior grief Pelides stood ;

Those slaught'ring arms, so us'd to bathe in blood,

Now clasp his clay-cold limbs : then gushing start

The tears, and sighs burst from his swelling heart. 370

The lion thus, with dreadful anguish stung,

Roars through the desert, and demands his young :

When the grim savage to his rifled den

Too late returning, snuffs the track of men,

damas, as accusing him of being rich, and of not opening the advice he had given, for any other end than to preserve his great wealth ; for riches commonly make men cowards, and the desire of saving them has often occasioned men to give advice very contrary to the public welfare.



Book XVIII. H O M E R's I L I A D. 339

And o'er the vales and o'er the forest bounds ; 375

His clam'rous grief the bellowing wood resounds.

So greives Achilles ; and impetuous, vents

To all his Myrmidons, his loud laments.

In what vain promise, gods ! did I engage ?

When to console Menœtius' feeble age, 380

I vow'd his much-lov'd offspring to restore,

Charg'd with rich spoils to fair Opuntia's shore !

But mighty Jove cuts short, with just disdain,

The long, long views of poor, designing man !

One fate the warrior and the friend shall strike, 385

And Troy's black sands must drink our blood alike :

Me too a wretched mother shall deplore,

An aged father never see me more !

Yet, my Patroclus ! yet a space I stay,

Then swift pursue thee on the darksome way. 390

v. 379. *In what vain promise.*] The lamentation of Achilles over the body of Patroclus is exquisitely touched : it is sorrow in the extreme, but the sorrow of Achilles. It is nobly ushered in by that simile of the grief of the lion. An idea which is fully answered in the savage and bloody conclusion of his speech. One would think by the beginning of it, that Achilles did not know his fate, till after his departure from Opuntium ; and yet how does that agree with what is said of his choice of the short and active life, rather than the long and inglorious one ? Or did not he flatter himself sometimes, that his fate might be changed ? This may be conjectured from several other passages, and is indeed the most natural solution.

Ere thy dear relics in the grave are laid,  
Shall Hector's head be offer'd to thy shade ;  
That, with his arms, shall hang before thy shrine ;  
And twelve the noblest of the Trojan line,  
Sacred to vengeance, by this hand expire ; 395  
Their lives effus'd around thy flaming pyre.  
Thus let me lie till then ! thus, closely prett,  
Bathe thy cold face, and sob upon thy breast !  
While Trojan captives here thy mourners stay,  
Weep all the night, and murmur all the day : 400  
Spoils of my arms, and thine ; when, wasting wide,  
Our swords kept time, and conquer'd side by side.

He spoke, and bid the sad attendants round  
Cleanse the pale corse, and wash each honour'd wound,  
A massy cauldron of stupendous frame 405  
They brought, and plac'd it o'er the rising flame :  
Then heap the lighted wood ; the flame divides  
Beneath the vase, and climbs around the sides :  
In its wide womb they pour the rushing stream ;  
The boiling water bubbles to the brim. 410  
The body then they bathe with pious toil,  
Embalm the wounds, anoint the limbs with oil,

v. 404. *Cleanse the pale corse, etc.*] This custom of washing the dead, is continued among the Greeks to this day ; and it is a pious duty performed by the nearest friend or relation, to see it washed and anointed with a perfume, after which they cover it with linen exactly in the manner here related.

High on a bed of state extended laid,  
 And decent cover'd with a linen shade;  
 Last o'er the dead the milk-white veil they threw; 415  
 That done, their sorrows and their sighs renew.

Meanwhile to Juno, in the realms above,  
 His wife and sister, spoke almighty Jove.  
 At last thy will prevails: great Peleus' son  
 Rises in arms: such grace thy Greeks have won. 420  
 Say, for I know not, is their race divine,  
 And thou the mother of that martial line?

What words are these (th' imperial dame replies,  
 While anger flash'd from her majestic eyes)  
 Succour like this a mortal arm might lend, 425  
 And such success mere human wit attend:  
 And shall not I, the second pow'r above,  
 Heav'n's queen, and consort of the thund'ring Jove,  
 Say, shall not I, one nation's fate command,  
 Not wreck my vengeance on one guilty land? 430

So they. Meanwhile the silver-footed dame,  
 Reach'd the Vulcanian dome, eternal frame!  
 High-eminent amid the works divine,  
 Where heav'n's far-beaming brazen mansions shine.

v. 417. *Jupiter and Juno.*] Virgil has copied the speech of Juno to Jupiter. *Asi ego quæ divum incedo regina*, etc. But it is exceeding remarkable, that Homer should, upon every occasion, make marriage and discord inseparable: it is an unalterable rule with him to introduce the husband and wife in a quarrel.

There the lame architect the goddess found, 435  
 Obscure in smoke, his forges flaming round,  
 While bath'd in sweat from fire to fire he flew,  
 And puffing loud, the roaring bellows blew,  
 That day no common task his labour claim'd ;  
 Full twenty tripods for his hall he fram'd, 440

v. 440. *Full twenty tripods.*] Tripods were vessels supported on three feet, with handles on the sides ; they were of several kinds and for several uses ; some were consecrated to sacrifices, some used as tables, some as seats, others hung up as ornaments on walls of houses or temples ; these of Vulcan have an addition of wheels, which was not usual, which intimates them to be made with clock-work. Mons. Dacier has commented very well on this passage. If Vulcan, says he, had made ordinary tripods, they had not answered the greatness, power and skill of a god. It was therefore necessary that this work should be above that of men : to effect this, the tripods were animated, and in this Homer doth not deviate from the probability ; for every one is fully persuaded, that a god can do things more difficult than these, and that all matter will obey him. What has not been said of the statues of Dædalus ! Plato writes, that they walked alone, and if they had not taken care to tie them, they would have got loose, and run from their master. If a writer in prose can speak hyperbolically of a man, may not Homer do it much more of a god ? Nay, this circumstance with which Homer has embellished his poem, would have had nothing too surprizing though these tripods had been made by a man ; for what may not be done in clock-work by an exact management of springs ? This criticism is then ill grounded, and Homer does not deserve the ridicule they would cast on him.

That plac'd on living wheels of massy gold,  
Wond'rous to tell, instinct with spirit roll'd  
From place to place, around the blest abodes,  
Self-mov'd, obedient to the beck of gods:  
For their fair handles now, o'er-wrought with flow'rs,  
In molds prepar'd, the glowing ore he pours. 446  
Just as responsive to his thought the frame  
Stood prompt to move, the azure goddess came :

The same author applies to this passage of Homer that rule of Aristotle, Poetic. cap. 26. which deserves to be alledged at large on this occasion.

“ When a poet is accused of saying any thing that  
“ is impossible ; we must examine that impossibility ei-  
“ ther with respect to *poetry*, with respect to that which  
“ is *best*, or with respect to *common sense*. First, with  
“ regard to poetry. The *probable impossible* ought to  
“ be preferred to the *possible* which hath no verisimili-  
“ tude, and which would not be believed ; and it is  
“ thus that Zeuxis painted his pieces. Secondly, with  
“ respect to that which is *best*, we see that a thing is  
“ more excellent and more wonderful this way, and that  
“ the originals ought always to surpass. Lastly, in re-  
“ spect to *sense*, it is proved that the poet need only fol-  
“ low the common opinion. All that appears absurd  
“ may also be justified by one of these three ways ; or  
“ else by the maxim we have already laid down, that it  
“ is probable, that a great many things may happen a-  
“ gainst probability.”

A late critic has taken notice of the conformity of this passage of Homer with that in the first chapter of Ezekiel, *The spirit of the living creature was in the wheels : when those went, these went ; and when those stood, these stood ; and when those were lifted up, the wheels were lifted up over against them ; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.*



Charis, his spouse, a grace divinely fair,  
 (With purple fillets round her braided hair) 450  
 Observ'd her ent'ring; her soft hand she press'd,  
 And smiling, thus the wat'ry queen address'd.

What, goddess! this unusual favour draws?  
 All hail! and welcome! whatsoe'er the cause:  
 'Till now a stranger, in a happy hour, 455  
 Approach, and taste the dainties of the bow'r.

High on a throne, with stars of silver grac'd,  
 And various artifice, the queen she plac'd;  
 A footstool at her feet: then calling, said,  
 Vulcan, draw near, 'tis Thetis asks your aid. 460

v. 459. *A footstool at her feet.*] It is at this day the usual honour paid amongst the Greeks, to visitors of superior quality, to set them higher than the rest of the company, and put a footstool under their feet. See note on v. 179. book 14. This, with innumerable other customs, are still preserved in the eastern nations.

v. 460. *Vulcan, draw near, 'tis Thetis asks your aid.*] The story the ancients tell of Plato's application of this verse, is worth observing. That great philosopher had in his youth a strong inclination to poetry, and not being satisfied to compose little pieces of gallantry and amour, he tried his force in tragedy and epic poetry; but the success was not answerable to his hopes: he compared his performance with that of Homer, and was very sensible of the difference. He therefore abandoned a sort of writing wherein at best he could only be the second, and turned his views to another, wherein he despaired not to become the first. His anger transported him so far, as to cast all his verses into the fire. But while he was burning them, he could not help citing a verse of the very poet who had caused his chagrin.



Thetis, reply'd the god, our pow'rs may claim,  
An ever-dear, an ever-honour'd name !

It was the present line, which Homer has put into the mouth of Charis, when Thetis demands arms for Achilles.

Ἡφαιστὶ προμολ' ᾄδει, Οἷτις νύ τι σεῖο χαρίζει.

Plato only inserted his own name instead of that of Thetis.

*Vulcan draw near, 'tis Plato asks your aid.*

If we credit the ancients, it was the discontentment his own poetry gave him, that rais'd in him all the indignation he afterwards express'd against the art itself. In which, say they, he behaved like those lovers, who speak ill of the beauties whom they cannot prevail upon. Fraguier, Parall. de Hom. et de Platon.

v. 461. *Thetis, reply'd the god, our pow'rs may claim, etc.*] Vulcan throws by his work to perform Thetis's request, who had laid former obligations upon him ; the poet in this example giving us an excellent precept, that gratitude should take place of all other concerns.

The motives which should engage a god in a new work in the night-time upon a suit of armour for a mortal ought to be strong ; and therefore artfully enough put upon the foot of gratitude : besides, they afford at the same time a noble occasion for Homer to retail his theology, which he is always very fond of.

The allegory of Vulcan, or fire, according to Heraclides, is this. His father is Jupiter, or the Æther, his mother Juno, or the air, from whence he fell to us, whether by lightning, or otherwise. He is said to be lame, that is, to want support, because he cannot subsist without the continual subsistence of fuel. The æthereal fire Homer calls Sol or Jupiter, the inferior Vulcan ; the one wants nothing of perfection, the other

When my proud mother hurl'd me from the sky,  
 (My aukward form, it seems, displeas'd her eye)  
 She, and Eurynome, my griefs redrest, 465  
 And soft receiv'd me on their silver breast,  
 Ev'n then, these arts employ'd my infant thought;  
 Chains, bracelets, pendants, all their toys I wrought.  
 Nine years kept secret in the dark abode,  
 Secure I lay conceal'd from man and god: 470  
 Deep in a cavern'd rock my days were led;  
 The rushing ocean murmur'd o'er my head.  
 Now since her presence glads our mansion, say,  
 For such desert what service can I pay?  
 Vouchsafe, O Thetis! at our board to share 475  
 The genial rites, and hospitable fare;

is subject to decay, and is restored by accession of materials. Vulcan is said to fall from heaven, because at first, when the opportunity of obtaining fire was not so frequent, men prepared instruments of brass, by which they collected the beams of the sun; or else they gained it from accidental lightning, that set fire to some combustible matter. Vulcan had perished when he fell from heaven, unless Thetis and Eurynome had received him; that is, unless he had been preserved by falling into some convenient receptacle, or subterranean place; and so was afterwards distributed for the common necessities of mankind. To understand these strange explications, it must be known that Thetis is derived from *τιθημι* to lay up, and Eurynome from *εὐρύς* and *νομή*, a wide distribution. They are all called daughters of the ocean, because the vapours and exhalations of the sea forming themselves into clouds, find nourishment for lightnings.

While I the labours of the forge forgo,  
And bid the roaring bellows cease to blow.

Then from his anvil the lame artist rose ;  
Wide with distorted legs oblique he goes, 480  
And stills the bellows, and, in order laid,  
Locks in their chests his instruments of trade.  
Then with a sponge the footy workman drest  
His brawny arms imbrown'd, and hairy breast.  
With his huge sceptre grac'd, and red attire; 485  
Came halting forth the sovereign of the fire ;  
The monarch's steps two female forms uphold,  
That mov'd, and breath'd, in animated gold :  
To whom was voice, and sense, and science giv'n  
Of works divine (such wonders are in heav'n !) 490  
On these supported, with unequal gait,  
He reach'd the throne where pensive Thetis fate ;  
There plac'd beside her on the shining frame,  
He thus address'd the silver-footed dame.

v. 488. ———— *Two female forms,*

*That mov'd, and breath'd, in animated gold.]*

It is very probable, that Homer took the idea of these from the statues of Dædalus, which might be extant in his time. The ancients tell us, they were made to imitate life, in rolling their eyes, and in all other motions. From whence indeed it should seem, that the excellency of Dædalus consisted in what we call clock-work, or the management of moving figures by springs, rather than in sculpture or imagery: and accordingly, the fable of his fitting wings to himself and his son, is formed intirely upon the foundation of the former.

Thee, welcome goddess ! what occasion calls, 495  
 So long a stranger, to these honour'd walls ?  
 'Tis thine, fair Thetis, the command to lay,  
 And Vulcan's joy and duty to obey.

To whom the mournful mother thus replies,  
 (The crystal drops stood trembling in her eyes) 500  
 O Vulcan ! say, was ever breast divine  
 So pierc'd with sorrows, so o'erwhelm'd as mine ?  
 Of all the goddesses, did Jove prepare  
 For Thetis only such a weight of care ?  
 I, only I, of all the watry race, 505  
 By force subjected to a man's embrace,  
 Who, sinking now with age and sorrow, pays  
 The mighty fine impos'd on length of days.  
 Sprung from my bed, a godlike hero came,  
 The bravest sure that ever bore the name ; 510  
 Like some fair plant beneath my careful hand  
 He grew, he flourish'd, and he grac'd the land :  
 To Troy I sent him ! but his native shore  
 Never, ah never, shall receive him more ;  
 (Ev'n while he lives, he wastes with secret woe) 515  
 Nor I, a goddess, can retard the blow !  
 Robb'd of the prize, the Grecian suffrage gave,  
 The king of nations forc'd his royal slave :

v. 517. *Robb'd of the prize, etc.*] Thetis to compass her design, recounts every thing to the advantage of her son; she therefore suppresses the episode of the embassy, the prayers that had been made use of to move him, and all that the Greeks had suffered after the return

For this he griev'd; and till the Greeks oppress,  
Requir'd his arm, he sorrow'd unredrest.

520

Large gifts they promise, and their elders send;  
In vain——He arms not, but permits his friend  
His arms, his steeds, his forces to employ;  
He marches, combates, almost conquers Troy:

Then slain by Phœbus, Hector had the name,

525

At once resigns his armour, life, and fame.

But thou, in pity, by my pray'r be won:

Grace with immortal arms this short-liv'd son,

And to the field in martial pomp restore,

To shine with glory, till he shines no more!

530

To her the artist-god. Thy griefs resign,  
Secure, what Vulcan can, is ever thine.

turn of the ambassadors; and artfully puts together two very distant things, as if they had followed each other in the same moment. He declined, says she, to succour the Greeks, but he sent Patroclus. Now, between his refusing to help the Greeks, and his sending Patroclus, terrible things had fallen out; but she suppresses them, for fear of offending Vulcan with the recital of Achilles's inflexible obduracy, and thereby create in that god an aversion to her son. Eustathius.

v. 525. *Then slain by Phœbus, Hector had the name.*]

It is a passage worth taking notice of, that Brutus is said to have consulted the Sortes Homericæ, and to have drawn one of these lines, wherein the death of Patroclus is ascribed to Apollo: after which, unthinkingly, he gave the name of that god for the word of battle. This is remarked as an unfortunate omen by some of the ancients, though I forget where I met with it,



O could I hide him from the fates as well,  
 Or with these hands the cruel stroke repel,  
 As I shall forge most envy'd arms, the gaze, 535  
 Of wond'ring ages, and the world's amaze !

Thus having said, the father of the fires  
 To the black labours of his forge retires.

v. 537. *The father of the fires, etc.*] The ancients, says Eustathius, have largely celebrated the philosophical mysteries which they imagined to be shadowed under these descriptions, especially Damo, supposed the daughter of Pythagoras, whose explication is as follows. Thetis, who receives the arms, means the apt order and disposition of all things in the creation. By the fire and the wind raised by the bellows, are meant *air* and *fire* the most active of all the elements. The emanations of the fire are those golden maids that waited on Vulcan. The circular shield is the *world*, being of a spherical figure. The gold, the brass, the silver, and the tin are the elements. Gold is fire, the firm brass is earth, the silver is air, and the soft tin, water. And thus far, say they, Homer speaks a little obscurely, but afterwards he names them expressly ἐν μὲν γαῖαν ἔτευξ', ἐν δ' ἄρανόν, ἐν δὲ θάλασσαν, to which, for the fourth element, you must add Vulcan, who makes the shield. The extreme circle that run round the shield which he calls *splendid* and *threefold*, is the zodiac; threefold in its breadth, within which all the planets move; splendid, because the sun passes always through the midst of it. The silver handle by which the shield is fastned, at both extremities, is the axis of the world, imagined to pass through it, and upon which it turns. The five folds are those parallel circles that divide the world, the polar, the tropics, and the æquator.

Heraclides Ponticus thus pursues the allegory. Homer, says he, makes the working of his shield, that is,



Soon as he bade them blow, the bellows turn'd  
Their iron mouths; and where the furnace burn'd,

the world, to be begun by Night; as indeed all matter lay undistinguished in an original and universal Night; which is called Chaos by the poets.

To bring the matter of the shield to separation and form, Vulcan presides over the work, or, as we may say, an essential warmth: *All things, says Heraclitus, being made by the operation of fire.*

And because the architect is at this time to give a form and ornament to the world he is making, it is not rashly that he is said to be married to one of the Graces.

*On the broad shield the maker's hand engraves  
The earth and seas beneath, the pole above,  
The sun unwearied, and the circled moon.*

Thus in the beginning of the world, he first lays the earth as a foundation of a building, whose vacancies are filled up with the flowings of the sea. Then he spreads out the sky for a kind of divine roof over it, and lights the elements, now separated from their former confusion, with the Sun, the Moon,

*And all those stars that crown the skies with fire:*

Where, by the word *crown*, which gives the idea of roundness, he again hints at the figure of the world; and though he could not particularly name the stars like Aratus, who professed to write upon them, yet he has not omitted to mention the principal. From hence he passes to represent two allegorical cities, one of Peace, the other of War: Empidocles seems to have taken from Homer his assertion, that all things had their original from Strife and Friendship.

All these refinements, not to call them absolute whimsies, I leave just as I found them, to the reader's judg-

Refounding breath'd : at once the blast expires, 541

And twenty forges catch at once the fires ;

Just as the god directs, now loud, now low,

They raise a tempest, or they gently blow.

In hissing flames huge silver bars are roll'd, 545

And stubborn brass, and tin, and solid gold :

Before, deep fix'd, th' eternal anvils stand ;

The pond'rous hammer loads his better hand,

His left with tongs turns the vex'd metal round,

And thick, strong strokes, the doubling vaults rebound.

Then first he form'd th' immense and solid shield ;

Rich, various artifice emblaz'd the field ;

Its outmost verge a threefold circle bound ;

A silver chain suspends the massy round,

Five ample plates the broad expanse compose, 555

And godlike labours on the surface rose.

There shone the image of the master mind :

There earth, there heav'n, there ocean-he design'd ;

Th' unweary'd sun, the moon completely round ;

The starry lights that heav'n's high convex crown'd ;

The Pleiads, Hyads, with the northern team ; 461

And great Orion's more refulgent beam ;

To which, around the axle of the sky,

The Bear revolving, points his golden eye,

ment or mercy. They call it learning to have read them,  
but I fear it is folly to quote them.

Still shines exalted on th' æthereal plain 565

Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main,

v. 566. *Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.*]

The critics make use of this passage, to prove that Homer was ignorant of astronomy; since he believed that the Bear was the only constellation which never bathed itself in the ocean, that is to say, that did not set, and was always visible; for, say they, this is common to other constellations of the arctic circle, as the lesser Bear, the Dragon, the greatest part of Cepheus, *etc.* To save Homer, Aristotle answers, That he calls it the only one, to shew that it is the only one of those constellations he had spoken of, or that he has put the *only* for the *principal* or the *most known*. Strabo justifies this after another manner, in the beginning of his first book: "Under the name of the Bear and the Chariot, "Homer comprehends all the arctic circle; for there "being several other stars in that circle which never "set, he could not say, that the Bear was the only "one which did not bathe itself in the ocean; where- "fore those are deceived, who accuse the poet of ig- "norance, as if he knew one Bear only when there are "two; for the lesser was not distinguished in his "time. The Phœnicians were the first who observed "it, and made use of it in their navigation; and the "figure of that sign passed from them to the Greeks: "the same thing happened in regard to the constellati- "on of Berenice's hair, and that of Canopus, which "received those names very lately; and as Aratus says "well, there are several other stars which have no "names. Crates was then in the wrong to endeavour "to correct this passage, in putting *οἶος* for *οἷη*, for he "tries to avoid that which there is no occasion to a- "void. Heraclitus did better, who put the Bear for "the Arctic circle, as Homer has done. *The Bear*, says "he, *is the limit of the rising and setting of the*

Two cities radiant on the shield appear,  
The image one of Peace, and one of War;

*"stars."* Now, it is the Arctic circle, not the Bear which is that limit. "It is therefore evident, that  
" by the word *Bear*, which he calls the *Waggon*, and  
" which he says observes Orion, he understands the  
" arctic circle; that by the ocean he means the hori-  
" zon where the stars rise and set; and by those words,  
" *which turns in the same place, and doth not bathe itself*  
" *in the ocean*, he shews that the arctic circle is the  
" most nothern part of the horizon, *etc.*" Dacier on Arift.

Monf. Teraſſon combates this paſſage with great warmth. But it will be a ſufficient vindication of our author to ſay, that ſome other conſtellations, which are likewise perpetually above the horizon in the latitude where Homer writ, were not at that time diſcovered; and that whether Homer knew that the Bear's not ſetting was occaſioned by the latitude, and that in a ſmaller latitude it would ſet, is of no conſequence; for if he had known it, it was ſtill more poetical not to take notice of it.

v. 567. *Two cities, etc.*] In one of theſe cities are repreſented all the advantages of peace: and it was impoſſible to have choſen two better emblems of peace, than marriages and juſtice. It is ſaid this city was Athens, for marriages were firſt inſtituted there by Cecrops; and judgment upon murder was firſt founded there. The ancient ſtate of Attica ſeems repreſented in the neighbouring fields, where the ploughers and reapers are at work, and a king is over looking them: for Triptolemus who reigned there, was the firſt who ſowed corn: this was the imagination of Agallias Cercyreus, as we find him cited by Euſtathius.

Book XVIII. HOMER'S ILIAD. 355

Here sacred pomp, and genial feast delight,  
And solemn dance, and Hymenæal rite ; 570

Along the street the new-made brides are led,  
With torches flaming to the nuptial bed ;  
The youthful dancers in a circle bound  
To the soft flute, and cittern's silver sound :  
Through the fair streets, the matrons in a row, 575  
Stand in their porches, and enjoy the show.

There, in the forum swarm a num'rous train,  
The subject of debate, a townsman slain :  
One pleads the fine discharg'd, which one deny'd,  
And bade the public and the laws decide : 580  
The witness is produc'd on either hand ;  
For this, or that, the partial people stand :  
Th'appointed heralds still the noisy bands,  
And form a ring, with sceptres in their hands ;  
On seats of stone, within the sacred place, 585  
The rev'rend elders nodded o'er the case ;

v. 579. *The fine discharg'd.*] Murder was not always punished with death, or so much as banishment ; but when some fine was paid, the criminal was suffered to remain in the city. So Iliad 9.

——Καὶ μὲν τις τε πασιγνήτοιο φόνος

Ποινὴν ἢ ἔσ' παιδὸς ἐδέξατο τεθνηϊῶτος.

Καὶ ῥ' ὁ μὲν ἐν δήμῳ μένει αὐτῷ πολλὰ ἀποτίσας.

—— If a brother bleed

On just atonement we remit the deed,

A fine the slaughter of his son forgives,

The price of blood discharg'd, the murd'rer lives.



Alternate, each th' attesting sceptre took,  
 And rising solemn, each his sentence spoke.  
 Two golden talents lay amidst, in fight,  
 The prize of him who best adjudg'd the right. 590

Another part, a prospect diff'ring far,  
 Glow'd with refulgent arms. and horrid war.  
 Two mighty hosts a leaguer'd town embrace,  
 And one would pillage, one would burn the place.

v. 590. *The prize of him who best adjudg'd the right.*] Eustathius informs us, that it was anciently the custom to have a reward given to that judge who pronounced the best sentence. M. Dacier opposes this authority, and will have it, that this reward was given to the person who, upon the decision of the suit, appeared to have the justest cause. The difference between these two customs, in the reason of the thing, is very great: for the one must have been an encouragement to justice, the other a provocation to dissension. It were to be wanting in due reverence to the wisdom of the ancients, and of Homer in particular, not to chuse the former sense: and I have the honour to be confirmed in this opinion, by the ablest judge, as well as the best practiser, of equity, my lord Harcourt, at whose seat I translated this book.

v. 591. *Another part, a prospect diff'ring far, etc.*] The same Agallias cited above, would have this city in war to be meant of Eleusina, but upon very slight reasons. What is wonderful, is, that all the accidents and events of war are set before our eyes in this short compass. The several scenes are excellently disposed to represent the whole affair. Here is in the space of thirty lines, a siege, a sally, an ambush, the surprize of a convoy, and a battle; with scarce a single circumstance proper to any of these, omitted.



Book XVIII. HOMER'S I L I A D. 357

Meantime the townsmen, arm'd with silent care, 595

A secret ambush on the foe prepare :

Their wives, their children, and the watchful band  
Of trembling parents on the turrets stand.

They march ; by Pallas and by Mars made bold :  
Gold were the gods, their radiant garments gold, 600

And gold their armour : these the squadron led,  
August, divine, superior by the head !

A place for ambush fit, they found and flood  
Cover'd with shields, beside a silver flood.

Two spies at distance lurk, and watchful seem 605  
If sheep or oxen seek the winding stream.

Soon the white flocks proceeded o'er the plains,  
And steers slow-moving, and two shepherd swains ;

Behind them, piping on their reeds, they go,  
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe. 610

In arms the glitt'ring squadron rising round,  
Rush sudden ; hills of slaughter heap the ground,

Whole flocks and herds lie bleeding on the plains,  
And, all amidst them, dead, the shepherd swains !

The bellowing oxen the besiegers hear ; 615

They rise, take horse, approach, and meet the war ;

They fight, they fall, beside the silver flood ;

The waving silver seem'd to blush with blood.

There Tumult, there Contention stood confest ;

One rear'd a dagger at a captive's breast, 620

v. 619. *There Tumult, etc.*] This is the first place in  
the whole description of the buckler, where Homer rises

One held a living foe, that freshly bled  
 With new-made wounds; another dragg'd a dead;  
 Now here, now there, the carcasses they tore:  
 Fate stalk'd amidst them, grim with human gore.  
 And the whole war came out, and met the eye; 625  
 And each bold figure seem'd to live, or die.

A field deep furrow'd, next the god design'd,  
 The third time labour'd by the sweating hind;

in his stile, and uses the allegorical ornaments of poetry; so natural it was for his imagination (now heated with the fighting scenes of the Iliad) to take fire when the image of a battle was presented to it.

v. 627. *A field deep furrow'd*, etc.] Here begin the descriptions of rural life, in which Homer appears as great a master as in the great and terrible parts of poetry. One would think, he did this on purpose to rival his contemporary Hesiod, on those very subjects to which his genius was particularly bent. Upon this occasion, I must take notice of that Greek poem, which is commonly ascribed to Hesiod, under the title of *Ἀσπίς Ἡρακλῆος*. Some of the ancients mention such a work as Hesiod's, but that amounts to no proof that this is the same: which indeed is not an express poem upon the shield of Hercules, but a fragment of the story of that hero. What regards the shield is a manifest copy from this of Achilles; and consequently it is not of Hesiod. For if he was not more ancient, he was at least contemporary with Homer: and neither of them could be supposed to borrow so shamelessly from the other, not only the plan of entire descriptions (as those of the marriage, the harvest, the vineyard, the ocean round the margin, *etc.*) but also whole verses together: those of the Parca, in the battle, are repeated word for word,

The shining shares full many plowmen guide,  
And turn their crooked yokes on ev'ry side.

630

— — — — — ἐν δ' ὁλοὴ Κῆρ,  
 Ἄλλον ζῶν ἐχυσσά νεῦτατον, ἄλλον ἄστων,  
 Ἄλλον τεθνεῖσιν κατὰ μόθον ἔλκε ποδοῖν.  
 Εἴμα δ' ἔχ' ἀμφ' ὤμοισι δαφοίνεον αἵματι φωτῶν.

And indeed half the poem is but a sort of Cento composed out of Homer's verses. The reader need only cast an eye upon these two descriptions, to see the vast difference of the original and the copy, and I dare say he will readily agree with the sentiment of Monsr. Dacier, in applying to them that famous verse of Sanazarius,

*Illum hominem dices, hunc posuisse Deum.*

v. idem.] I ought not to forget the many apparent allusions to the descriptions on this shield, which are to be found in those pictures of Peace and War, the City and Country, in the 11th book of Milton: who was doubtless fond of any occasion to shew, how much he was charmed with the beauty of all these lively images. He makes his angels paint those objects which he shews to Adam, in the colours, and almost the very strokes of Homer. Such is that passage of the harvest field,

*His eye he open'd, and beheld a field  
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves  
 New-reap'd; the other part sheep-walks and folds.  
 In midst an altar, as the land-mark, stood,  
 Rustic, of grassy sod, etc.*

That of the marriages,

*They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke*

Still as at either end they wheel around,  
 The master meets them with his goblet crown'd;  
 The hearty draught rewards, renews the toil,  
 Then back the turning plough-shares cleave the soil;  
 Behind, the rising earth in ridges roll'd, 635  
 And fable look'd, though form'd of molten gold.

Another field rose high with waving grain;  
 With bended sickles stand the reaper-train:

*Hymen (then first to marriage rites invoc'd)  
 With feast and music all the tents resound.*

But more particularly, the following lines are in a manner a translation of our author.

*One way a band select from forage drives  
 A herd of bees, fair oxen and fair kine  
 From a fat meadow-ground; or fleecy flock,  
 Ewes and their bleating lambs, across the plain,  
 Their booty: scarce with life the shepherds fly,  
 But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray,  
 With cruel tournament the squadrons join  
 Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies  
 With carcasses and arms th' ensanguin'd field  
 Deserted——Others to a city strong  
 Lay siege, encamp'd; by battery, scale, and mine  
 Assaulting; others from the wall defend  
 With dart and jav'lin, stones and sulph'rous fire:  
 On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.  
 In other part the scepter'd heralds call  
 To council in the city gates: anon  
 Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mixt,  
 Assemble, and harangues are heard——*

Here stretch'd in ranks the levell'd swarths are found,  
 Sheaves heap'd on sheaves, here thicken up the ground.  
 With sweeping stroke the mowers strow the lands ; 641  
 The gath'ers follow, and collect in bands ;  
 And last the children, in whose arms are borne  
 (Too short to grip them) the brown sheaves of corn.

The rustic monarch of the field describes 645  
 With silent glee, the heaps around him rise.  
 A ready banquet on the turf is laid,  
 Beneath an ample oak's expanded shade.  
 The victim-ox the sturdy youth prepare ;  
 The reaper's due repast, the womens care. 650

Next, ripe in yellow gold, a vineyard shines,  
 Bent with the pond'rous harvest of its vines ;  
 A deeper dye the dangling clusters show,  
 And curl'd on silver props, in order glow :  
 A darker metal mixt, intrench'd the place ; 655  
 And pales of glitt'ring tin th' inclosure grace.  
 To this, one path-way gently winding leads,  
 Where march a train with baskets on their heads,  
 (Fair maids, and blooming youths) that smiling bear  
 The purple product of th' autumnal year. 660

v. 645. *The rustic monarch of the field.*] Dacier takes this to be a piece of ground given to a hero in reward of his services. It was in no respect unworthy such a person, in those days, to see his harvest got in, and to overlook his reapers : it is very conformable to the manners of the ancient patriarchs, such as they are described to us in the holy scriptures.

To these a youth awakes the warbling strings,  
 Whose tender lay the fate of Linus sings;  
 In measur'd dance behind him move the train,  
 'Tune soft the voice, and answer to the strain.

Here, herds of oxen march, erect and bold 665  
 Rear high their horns, and seem to lowe in gold,

v. 662. *The fate of Linus.*] There are two interpretations of this verse in the original: that which I have chosen is confirmed by the testimony of Herodotus, l. 2. and Pausanias, Bœoticis. Linus was the most ancient name in poetry, the first upon record who invented verse and measure amongst the Grecians: he past for the son of Apollo or Mercury, and was præceptor to Hercules, Thamyris, and Orpheus. There was a solemn custom among the Greeks of bewailing annually the death of their first poet: Pausanias informs us, that before the yearly sacrifice to the muses on mount Helicon, the obsequies of Linus were performed, who had a statue, and altar erected to him, in that place. Homer alludes to that custom in this passage, and was doubtless fond of paying this respect to the old father of poetry. Virgil has done the same in that fine celebration of him, Eclog. 6.

*Tum canit errantem Permessi ad flumina Gallum,  
 Utque viro Phœbi chorus assurrexerit omnis:  
 Ut Linus hæc illi, divino carmine, pastor  
 (Floribus atque apio crines ornatus amaro)  
 Dixerit:——etc.*

And again in the fourth Eclogue,

*Non me carminibus vincet nec Thracius Orpheus,  
 Nec Linus; huic mater quamvis atque huic pater  
 adsit,  
 Orpheo Galliopeæ, Lino formosus Apollo.*



And speed to meadows on whose sounding shores

A rapid torrent through the rushes rores :

Four golden herdsmen as their guardian stand,

And nine four dogs complete the rustic band. 670

Two lions rushing from the wood appear'd ;

And seiz'd a bull, the master of the herd ;

He roar'd : in vain the dogs, the men withstood,

They tore his flesh, and drank the sable blood.

The dogs, oft cheer'd in vain, desert the prey, 675

Dread the grim terrors, and at distance bay.

Next this, the eye the art of Vulcan leads

Deep through fair forests, and a length of meads :

v. 681. *A figur'd dance.*] There were two sorts of dances, the Pyrrhic and the common dance : Homer has joined both in this description. We see the Pyrrhic, or military, is performed by the youths who have swords on, the other by the virgins crowned with garlands.

Here the ancient scholiast says, that whereas before it was the custom for men and women to dance separately, the contrary practice was afterwards brought in, by seven youths, and as many virgins, who were saved by Theseus from the labyrinth ; and that this dance was taught them by Dædalus : to which Homer here alludes. See Dion. Halic. Hist. l. 7. c. 68.

It is worth observing, that the Grecian dance is still performed in this manner in the oriental nations : the youths and maids dance in a ring, beginning slowly : by degrees the music plays a quicker time, till at last they dance with the utmost swiftness : and towards the conclusion, they sing, as it is said here, in a general chorus.

And stalls, and folds, and scatter'd cotts between ;  
 And fleecy flocks, that whiten all the scene. 630

A figur'd dance succeeds ; such once was seen  
 In lofty Gnoſſus, for the Cretan queen,  
 Form'd by Dædalean art. A comely band  
 Of youths and maidens, bounding hand in hand ;  
 The maids in ſoft cymarrs of linen dreſt ; 685  
 The youths all graceful in the gloſſy veſt ;  
 Of thoſe the locks with flow'ry wreaths inroll'd,  
 Of theſe the ſides adorn'd with ſwords of gold,  
 That glitt'ring gay, from ſilver belts depend.

Now all at once they riſe, at once deſcend, 690  
 With well-taught feet : now ſhape, in oblique ways,  
 Conſus'dly regular, the moving maze :  
 Now forth at once, too ſwift for ſight they ſpring,  
 And undiſtinguiſh'd blend the flying ring :  
 So whirls a wheel, in giddy circle toſt, 695  
 And rapid as it runs, the ſingle ſpokes are loſt.  
 The gazing multitudes admire around ;  
 Two active tumblers in the centre bound ;  
 Now high, now low, their pliant limbs they bend,  
 And gen'ral ſongs the ſprightly revel end. 700

Thus the broad ſhield complete the artiſt crown'd  
 With his laſt hand, and pour'd the ocean round :

v. 702. ——— *And pour'd the ocean round.*] Vulcan was the god of fire, and paſſes over this part of the deſcription negligently ; for which reaſon Virgil, to take a different walk, makes half his deſcription of

In living silver seem'd the waves to roll,  
And beat the buckler's verge, and bound the whole.

This done, whate'er a warrior's use requires 705  
He forg'd ; the cuirass that outshone the fires,  
The greaves of ductile tin, the helm impress'd  
With various sculpture, and the golden crest,  
At Thetis' feet the finish'd labour lay ;  
She, as a falcon, cuts th' aerial way, 710  
Swift from Olympus' snowy summit flies,  
And bears the blazing present through the skies.

Æneas's buckler consist in a sea-fight. For the same reason he has laboured the sea-piece among his games more than any other, because Homer had described nothing of this kind at the funeral of Patroclus.



# OBSERVATIONS

## ON THE

### SHIELD of *ACHILLES*.

**T**HE poet intending to shew, in its full lustre, his genius for description makes choice of this interval from action and the leisure of the night, to display that talent at large in the famous buckler of Achilles. His intention was no less than to draw the picture of the whole world in this compass of this shield. We see first the universe in general; the heavens are spread, the stars are hung up, the earth is stretched forth, the seas are poured round: we next see the world in a nearer and more particular view; the cities delightful in peace, or formidable in war; the labours of the country, and the fruit of those labours, in the harvests and the vintages; the pastoral life in its pleasures, and its dangers: in a word all the occupations, all the ambitions, and all the diversions of mankind. This noble and comprehensive design he has executed in a manner that challenged the admiration of all the ancients: and how right an idea they had of this grand design, may be judged from that verse of Ovid. Met. 13. where he calls it,

— *Clypeus vasti cælatus imagine mundi.*

It is indeed astonishing, how, after this, the arrogance of some moderns could unfortunately chuse the noblest part

of the noblest poet for the object of their blind censures. Their criticisms, however just enough upon other parts, yet, when employed on this buckler, are to the utmost weak and impotent.

—*postquam arma Dei ad Vulcania ventum est*  
*Mortalis mucro, glacies seu futilis, icta*  
*Disiluit* —

I design to give the reader the sum of what has been said on this subject. First, a reply to those loose and scattered objections of the critics, by M. Dacier: then the regular plan and distribution of the shield, by Mons. Boivin: and lastly, I shall attempt, what has not been done, to consider it as a work of painting, and prove it in all respects, conformable to the most just ideas and established rules of that art.

I. It is the fate, says M. Dacier, of these arms of Achilles, to be still the occasion of quarrels and disputes. Julius Scaliger was the first who appeared against this part, and was followed by a whole herd. These object, in the first place, that it is impossible to represent the movement of the figures; and in condemning the manner, they take the liberty to condemn also the subject, which they say is trivial, and not well understood. It is certain that Homer speaks of the figures on this buckler, as if they were alive: and some of the ancients taking his expressions to the strictness of the letter, did really believe that they had all sorts of motion. Eustathius shewed the absurdity of that sentiment by a passage of Homer himself; “That poet, says he, to shew that his figures  
 “are not animated, as some have pretended by an excessive affection for the prodigious, took care to say  
 “that they *moved and fought*, as if *they were living men*.” The ancients certainly founded this ridiculous opinion on the rule of Aristotle: for they thought the poet could not by any means make this description



more *admirable* and *marvellous*, than in making his figures animated, since, as Aristotle says, the *original should always excel the copy*. That shield is the work of a god: it is the original, of which the engraving and painting of men is but an imperfect copy; and there is nothing impossible to the gods. But they did not perceive, that by this Homer would have fallen into an extravagant *admirable* which would not have been probable. Therefore it is without any necessity Eustathius adds “ That it is possible all those figures did not stick close “ to the shield, but that they were detached from it, and “ moved by springs, in such a manner that they appeared to have motion; as Æschylus has feigned something like it, in his *seven captains against Thebes*.” But without having recourse to that conjecture, we can shew, that there is nothing more simple and natural than the description of that shield, and there is not one word which Homer might not have said of it, if it had been the work of a man; for there is a great deal of difference between the work itself, and the description of it.

Let us examine the particulars for which they blame Homer. They say he describes two towns on his shield which *speak different languages*. It is the Latin translation, and not Homer, that says so; the word *μεροπων* is a common epithet of men, and which signifies only, that they have *an articulate voice*. These towns could not speak different languages, since, as the ancients have remarked, they were Athens and Eleusina, both which spake the same language. But though that epithet should signify, *which spoke different languages*, there would be nothing very surprizing; for Virgil said what Homer, it seems, must not:

*Vixte longo ordine gentes,*

*Quam varix linguis.——*      Æn. 8.

If a painter should put into a picture one town of France

and another of Flanders, might not one say they were two towns which spake different languages?

Homer, they tell us, says in another place, that *we bear the harangues of two pleaders*. This is an unfair exaggeration: he only says, *two men pleaded*, that is, were represented pleading. Was not the same said by Pliny of Nicomachus, that he had painted two Greeks which spake one after another? Can we express ourselves otherwise of these two arts, which, though they are mute, yet have a language? Or, in explaining a painting of Raphael or Poussin, can we prevent animating the figures, in making them speak conformably to the design of the painter? But how could the engraver represent those young shepherds and virgins that dance first in a ring, and then in setts? Or those troops which were in ambuscade? This would be difficult indeed if the workman had not the liberty to make his persons appear in different circumstances. All the objections against the young man who sings at the same time that he plays on the harp, the bull that rores whilst he is devoured by a lion, and against the musical consorts, are childish; for we can never speak of painting if we banish those expressions. Pliny says of Apelles, that he painted Clytus on horseback going to battle, and demanding his helmet of his squire: of Aristides, that he drew a beggar whom he could almost understand, *pene cum voce*: of Cresilochus, that he had painted Jupiter bringing forth Bacchus, and crying out like a woman, *et muliebriter ingemiscntem*: and of Nicearchus, that he had drawn a piece, in which Hercules was seen very melancholy on reflection of his madness, *Herculem tristem, insanie pœnitentia*. No one sure will condemn those ways of expression which are so common. The same author has said much more of Apelles: he tells us, he painted those things which could not be painted, as thunder; *pinxit quæ pingi non possunt*: and of Timanthis, that in all his works there was something more understood than was seen; and though there was all the

art imaginable, yet there was still more ingenuity than art: *Atque in omnibus ejus operibus, intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur; et cum ars summa sit, ingenium tamen ultra artem est.* If we take the pains to compare these expressions with those of Homer, we shall find him altogether excusable in this manner of describing the buckler.

We come now to the *matter*. If this shield, says a modern critic had been made in a wiser age, it would have been more correct and less charged with objects. There are two things which cause the censurers to fall into this false criticism: the first is, that they think the shield was no broader than the brims of a hat, whereas it was large enough to cover a whole man. The other is, that they did not know the design of the poet, and imagined this description was only the whimsy of an irregular wit, who did it by chance, and not following nature; for they never so much as entered into the intention of the poet, nor knew the shield was designed as a representation of the universe.

It is happy that Virgil has made a buckler for Æneas, as well as Homer for Achilles. The Latin poet, who imitated the Greek one, always took care to accommodate those things which time had changed, so as to render them agreeable to the palate of his readers; yet he hath not only charged his shield with a great deal more work, since he paints all the actions of the Romans from Ascanius to Augustus; but has not avoided any of those manners of expression which offend the critics. We see there the wolf of Romulus and Remus, who gives them her dugs *one after another, mulcere alternos, et corpora fingere lingua*: the rape of the Sabines, and the war which followed it, *subitoque novum consurgere bellum*: Metius, torn by four horses, and Tullus who draws his entrails through the forest: Porfenna commanding the Romans to receive Tarquin, and besieging Rome: the geese flying to the porches of the capitol, and giving notice by their cries of the attack of the Gauls.

*Atque hic auratis volitans argenteus anser  
Porticibus, Gailos in limine adesse canebat.*

We see the Salian dance, hell, and the pains of the damned; and farther off, the place of the blessed, where Cato presides: we see the famous battle of Actium, where we may distinguish the captains: Agrippa with the gods, and the winds favourable; and Antony leading on all the forces of the east, Egypt, and the Bactrians: the fight begins, the sea is red with blood, Cleopatra gives the signal for a retreat, and calls her troops with a Systrum. *Patrio vocat agmina Systro.* The gods, or rather the monsters of Egypt, fight against Neptune, Venus, Minerva, Mars, and Apollo: we see Antony's fleet beaten, and the Nile sorrowfully opening his bosom to receive the conquered: Cleopatra looks pale and almost dead at the thought of that death she had already determined; nay, we see the very wind Iapis which hastens her flight: we see the three triumphs of Augustus; that prince consecrates three hundred temples, the altars are filled with ladies offering up sacrifices, Augustus sitting at the entrance of Apollo's temple, receives presents, and hangs them on the pillars of the temple; while the conquered nations pass by, who *speak different languages*, and are differently equipped and armed.

—*Incedunt victæ longo ordine gentes,  
Quam variae linguis, habitu tum vestis et armis.*

Nothing can better justify Homer, or shew the wisdom and judgment of Virgil: he was charmed with Achilles's shield, and therefore would give the same ornament to his poem. But as Homer had painted the universe, he was sensible that nothing remained for him to do; he had no other way to take than that of prophecy, and shew what the descendant of his hero should perform; and he was not afraid to go beyond Homer, because there is nothing improbable in the hands of a god.

god. If the critics say, that this is justifying one fault by another ; I desire they would agree among themselves : for Scaliger, who was the first that condemned Homer's shield, admires Virgil's. But suppose they should agree, it would be foolish to endeavour to persuade us, that what Homer and Virgil have done by the approbation of all ages, is not good ; and to make us think, that their particular taste should prevail over that of all other men. Nothing is more ridiculous than to trouble one's self to answer men, who shew so little reason in their criticisms, that we can do them no greater favour, than to ascribe it to their ignorance.

Thus far the objections are answered by Mons. Dacier. Since when, some others have been started, as that the objects represented on the buckler, have no reference to the poem, no agreement with Thetis who procured it, Vulcan who made it, or Achilles for whom it was made.

To this it is replied, that the representation of the sea was agreeable enough to Thetis ; that the spheres and celestial fires were so to Vulcan ; (though the truth is, any piece of workmanship was equally fit to come from the hands of this god) and that the images of a town besieged, a battle, and an ambuscade, were objects sufficiently proper for Achilles. But after all, where was the necessity that they should be so ? They had at least been as fit for one hero as for another : and Æneas, as Virgil tells us, knew not what to make of the figures on his shield :

*Rerumque ignarus, imagine gaudet.*

II. But still the main objection, and that in which the vanity of the moderns has triumphed the most, is, that the shield is crouded with such a multiplicity of figures, as could not possibly be represented in the compass of it. The late dissertation of Mons. Boivin has put an end to this cavil and the reader will have the



pleasure to be convinced of it by ocular demonstration, in the print annexed

This author supposes the buckler to have been perfectly round: he divides the convex surface into four concentric circles.

The circle next the centre contains the globe of the earth and the sea, in miniature: he gives this circle the dimension of three inches.

The second circle is allotted for the heavens and the stars: he allows the space of ten inches between this and the former circle.

The third shall be eight inches distant from the second. The space between these two circles shall be divided into twelve compartments, each of which makes a picture of ten or eleven inches deep.

The fourth circle makes the margin of the buckler: and the interval between this and the former, being of three inches, is sufficient to represent the waves and currents of the ocean.

All these together make but four foot in the whole in diameter. The print of these circles and divisions will serve to prove, that the figures will neither be crowded nor confused, if disposed in the proper place and order.

As to the size and figure of the shield, it is evident from the poets, that in the time of the Trojan war there were shields of an extraordinary magnitude. The buckler of Ajax is often compared by Homer to a tower, and in the sixth Iliad that of Hector is described to cover him from the shoulders to the ankles.

Ἀμφὶ δὲ οἱ σφυρὰ τύπτε καὶ ἀυχένα δέρμα κελαινόν  
Ἀνὺξ ἢ πυμάτῃ θέεν ἄσπιδος ομφαλοεσσης. ver. 117.

In the second verse of the description of this buckler of Achilles, it is said that Vulcan cast round it a radiant circle,

Περὶ δ' ἄντυγα βάλλε φαεινὴν. ver. 479.

Which proves the figure to have been round. But if it



be alledged that *ἄντρον* as well signifies *oval* as *circular*, it may be answered, that the circular figure better agrees to the spheres represented in the centre, and to the course of the ocean at the circumference.

We may very well allow four foot diameter to this buckler: as one may suppose a larger size would have been too unwieldy, so a less would not have been sufficient to cover the breast and arm of a man of a stature so large as Achilles.

In allowing four foot diameter to the whole, each of the twelve compartments may be of ten or eleven inches in depth, which will be enough to contain, without any confusion, all the objects which Homer mentions. Indeed in this print, each compartment being but of one inch, the principal figures only are represented; but the reader may easily imagine the advantage of nine or ten inches more. However, if the critics are not yet satisfied, there is room enough, it is but taking in the literal sense the words *πάντοσε δαιδάλλων*, with which Homer begins his description, and the buckler may be supposed engraven on both sides, which supposition will double the size of each piece: the one side may serve for the general description of heaven and earth, and the other for all the particulars.

III. It having been now shewn, that the shield of Homer is blameless as to its design and disposition, and that the subject, so extensive as it is, may be contracted within the due limits; not being one vast unproportioned heap of figures, but divided into twelve regular compartments: what remains is to consider this piece as a complete *idea* of *painting*, and a sketch for what one may call an *universal picture*. This is certainly the light in which it is chiefly to be admired, and in which alone the critics have neglected to place it.

There is reason to believe that Homer did in this, as he has done in other arts, even in mechanics, that is, comprehend whatever was known of it in his time; if

not, as is highly probable, from thence extend his ideas yet farther, and give a more enlarged notion of it. Accordingly, it is very observable, that there is scarce a species or branch of this art which is not here to be found, whether history, battle-painting, landscape, architecture, fruits, flowers, animals, *etc.*

I think it possible that painting was arrived to a greater degree of perfection, even at that early period, than is generally supposed by those who have written upon it. Pliny expressly says, that it was not known in the time of the Trojan war. The same author, and others, represent it in a very imperfect state in Greece, in or near the days of Homer. They tell us of one painter, that he was the first who begun to shadow; and of another, that he filled his outlines only with a single colour, and that laid on every where alike: but we may have a higher notion of the art, from those descriptions of statues, carvings, tapestries, sculptures upon armour, and ornaments of all kinds, which every where occur in our author; as well as from what he says of their beauty, the relieve, and their emulation of life itself. If we consider how much it is his constant practice to confine himself to the custom of the times whereof he writ, it will be hard to doubt but that painting and sculpture must have been then in great practice and repute.

The shield is not only described as a piece of sculpture but of painting: the outlines may be supposed engraved, and the rest enameled, or inlaid with various-coloured metals. The variety of colours is plainly distinguished by Homer, where he speaks of the *blackness* of the new-opened earth, of the *several colours* of the grapes and vines; and in other places. The different metals that Vulcan is feigned to cast into the furnace, were sufficient to afford all the necessary colours: but if to those which are natural to the metals, we add also those which they are capable of receiving from the operation of fire, we shall find, that Vulcan had as great a variety of colours to make use of as any modern painter. That en-

amelling, or fixing colours by fire, was practised very anciently, may be conjectured from what Diodorus reports of one of the walls of Babylon, built by Semiramis, that *the bricks of it were painted before they were burned, so as to represent all sorts of animals*, l. 2. c. 4. Now, it is but natural to infer, that men had made use of ordinary colours for the representation of objects, before they learned to represent them by such as are given by the operation of fire; one being much more easy and obvious than the other, and that sort of painting by means of fire being but an imitation of the painting with a pencil and colours. The same inference will be farther enforced from the works of tapestry, which the women of those times interweaved with many colours; as appears from the description of that veil which Hecuba offers to Minerva in the sixth Iliad, and from a passage in the twenty-second, where Andromache is represented working flowers in a piece of this kind: They must certainly have known the use of colours themselves for painting, before they could think of dying threads with these colours, and weaving those threads close to one another, in order only to a more laborious imitation of a thing so much more easily performed by a pencil. This observation I owe to the abbe Fraguier.

It may indeed be thought, that a genius so vast and comprehensive as that of Homer, might carry his views beyond the rest of mankind, and that in this buckler of Achilles he rather designed to give a scheme of what might be performed, than a description of what really was so: and since he made a god the artist, he might excuse himself from a strict confinement to what was known and practised in the time of the Trojan war. Let this be as it will, it is certain that he had, whether by learning, or by strength of genius, (though the latter be more glorious for Homer) a full and exact idea of painting in all its parts; that is say, in the *invention*, the *composition*, the *expression*, etc.

The *invention* is shewn in finding and introducing,

in every subject, the *greatest*, the most *significant*, and most *suitable* objects. Accordingly in every single picture of the shield, Homer constantly finds out either those objects which are naturally the principal, those which most conduce to shew the subject, or those which set it in the liveliest and most agreeable light: these he never fails to dispose in the most advantageous manners, situations, and oppositions.

Next, we find all his figures differently *characterized*, in their expressions and attitudes, according to their several natures: the gods, for instance, are distinguished in air, habit, and proportion, from men, in the fourth picture; masters from servants, in the eighth; and so of the rest.

Nothing is more wonderful than his exact observation of the *contrast*, not only between figure and figure, but between subject and subject. The city in peace is a contrast to the city in war: between the siege in the fourth picture, and the battle in the sixth, a piece of *païlage* is introduced, and rural scenes follow after. The country too is represented in war in the fifth, as well as in peace in the seventh, eighth, and ninth. The very animals are shewn in these two different states, in the tenth and eleventh. Where the subjects appear the same, he contrasts them some other way: thus the first picture of the town in peace having a predominant air of gaiety, in the dances and pomps of the marriage; the second has a character of earnestness and sollicitude, in the dispute and pleadings. In the pieces of rural life, that of the plowing is of a different character from the harvest, and that of the harvest from the vintage. In each of these there is a contrast of the *labour* and *mirth* of the country people: in the first, some are plowing, others taking a cup of good liquor; in the next we see the reapers working in one part, and the banquet prepared in another; in the last, the labour of the vineyard is relieved with music and dance. The persons are no less varied, old and young men and women: there being women in two pictures together, namely, the eighth and ninth, it is remarkable, that those in the latter are of a

different character from the former; they who dress the supper being ordinary women, the others who carry baskets in the vineyard, young and beautiful virgins: and these again are of an inferior character to those in the twelfth piece, who are distinguished as people of condition by a more elegant dress. There are three dances in the buckler; and those too are varied: that at the wedding is in a circular figure, that of the vineyard in a row; that in the last picture, a mingled one. Lastly, there is a manifest contrast in the colours; nay, even in the back grounds of the several pieces: for example, that of the plowing is of a dark tinct, that of the harvest yellow, that of the pasture green, and the rest in like manner.

That he was not a stranger to aerial *perspective*, appears in his expressly marking the distance of object from object: he tells us, for instance, that the two spies lay a little remote from the other figures; and that the oak, under which was spread the banquet of the reapers, stood apart: what he says of the valley sprinkled all over with cottages and flocks, appears to be a description of a large country in perspective. And indeed, a general argument for this may be drawn from the number of figures on the shield; which could not be all expressed in their full magnitude: and this is therefore a sort of proof that the art of lessening them according to perspective was known at that time.

What the critics call the *three unities*, ought in reason as much to be observed in a picture as in a play; each should have only *one principal action*, one *instant of time*, and one *point of view*. In this method of examination also, the shield of Homer will bear the test: he has been more exact than the greatest painters, who have often deviated from one or other of these rules; whereas (when we examine the detail of each compartment) it will appear,

First, That there is but one principal action in each picture, and that no supernumerary figures or actions are introduced. This will answer all that has been said



of the confusion and croud of figures on the shield, by those who never comprehended the plan of it.

Secondly, That no action is represented in one piece, which could not happen in the same instant of time. This will overthrow the objection against so many different actions appearing in one shield; which, in this case, is as much absurd as to object against so many of Raphael's Cartons appearing in one gallery.

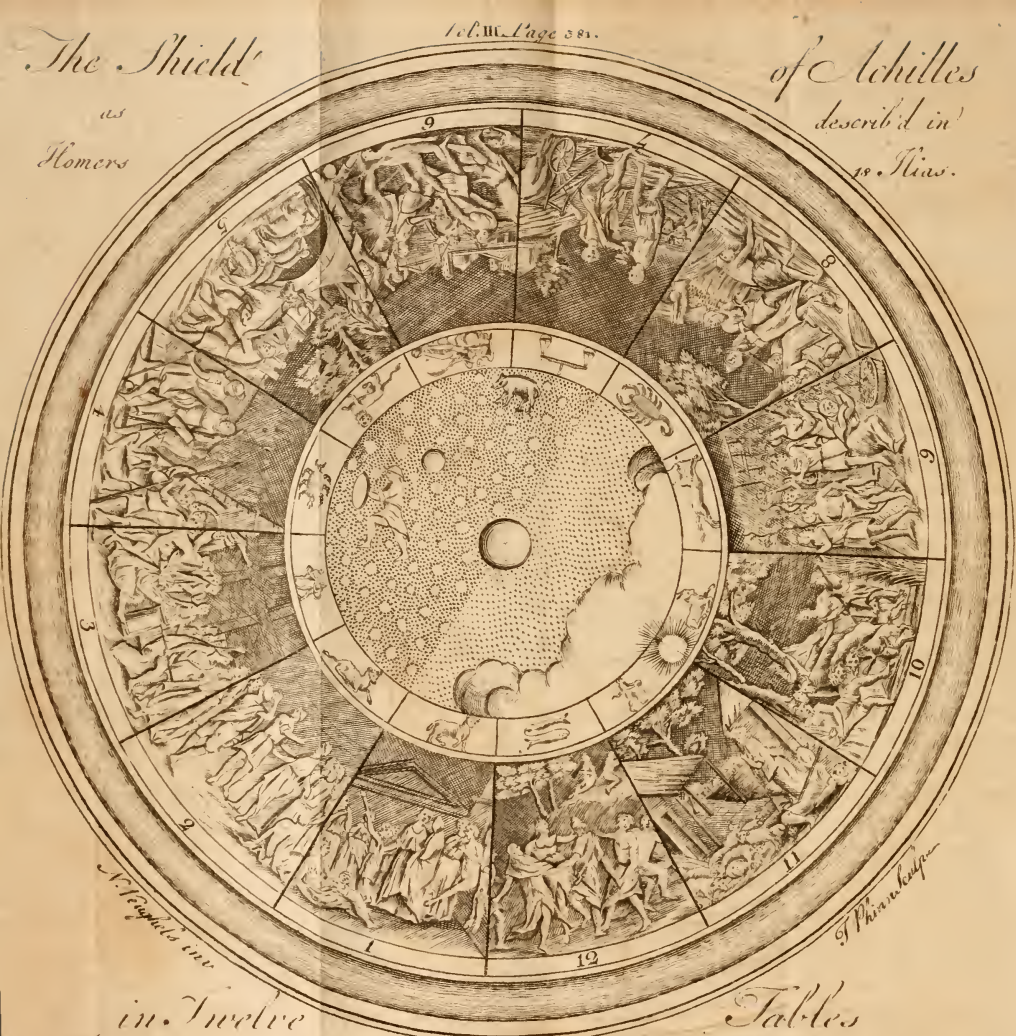
Thirdly, It will be manifest that there are no objects in any one picture which could not be seen in one point of view. Hereby the abbe Terrasson's whole criticism will fall to the ground, which amounts but to this, that the general objects of the heavens, stars, and sea, with the particular prospects of towns, fields, *etc.* could never be seen all at once. Homer was incapable of so absurd a thought, nor could these heavenly bodies, had he intended them for a picture, have ever been seen together from one point; for the constellations and the full moon, for example, could never be seen at once with the sun. But the celestial bodies were placed on the boss, as the ocean at the margin of the shield, these were no parts of the painting, but the former was only an ornament to the projection in the middle, and the latter a frame round about it: in the same manner as the divisions, projections, or angles of a roof are left to be ornamented at the discretion of the painter, with foliage, architecture, grotesque, or what he pleases: however, his judgment will be still more commendable, if he contrives to make even these extrinsical parts, to bear some allusion to the main design: it is this which Homer has done, in placing a sort of sphere in the middle, and the ocean at the border, of a work, which was so expressly intended to represent the universe.

I proceed now to the detail of the shield; in which the words of Homer being first translated, an attempt will be made to shew with what exact order all that he describes may enter into the composition, according to the rules of painting.





as  
*Homers*



*in Twelve*

*Tables*

*Three of a Town in Peace. 1. a Marriage. 2. An Assembly of the People. 3. a Senate.*  
*Three of a Town in War. 4. Desiged making a Sally. 5. Shepherds and their Flocks.*  
*falling into an Ambuscade or a Combat.*  
*Three of Agriculture. 6. Village. 8. Harvest. 9. a Vintage.*  
*Three of a Pastoral Life. 10. Flocks of Cattle. 11. Sheep. 12. the Dance.*

## T H E

SHIELD of *ACHILLES*.

Divided into its several Parts.

*The Boss of the SHIELD.*

VERSE 483. 'Εν μὲν γαῖαν, etc.] “ Here Vulcan  
 “ represented the earth, the heaven, the sea, the  
 “ indefatigable course of the sun, the moon in her full,  
 “ all the celestial signs that crown Olympus, the Pleiades,  
 “ the Hyades, the great Orion, and the Bear, commonly  
 “ called the Wain, the only constellation which, never  
 “ bathing itself in the ocean, turns about the pole, and  
 “ observes the course of Orion.”

The sculpture of these resembled somewhat our terrestrial and celestial globes, and took up the centre of the shield: it is plain by the huddle in which Homer expresses this, that he did not describe it as a picture for a point of sight.

The circumference is divided into twelve compartments, each being a separate picture: as follow.

First compartment. *A town in peace.*

'Εν δὲ δὺν ποιησε πολεις, etc.] “ He engraved two  
 “ cities; in one of them were represented nuptials and  
 “ festivals. The spouses from their bridal chambers, were  
 “ conducted, through the town by the light of torches.  
 “ Every mouth sung the hymenæal song: the youths  
 “ turned rapidly about in a circular dance: the flute and  
 “ the lyre resounded: the women, every one in the  
 “ street, standing in the porches, beheld and admired.”

In this picture, the brides preceded by torch-bearers, are on the fore-ground: the dance in circles, and musi-

cians behind them : the street in perspective on either side, the women and spectators in the porches, *etc.* dispersed through all the architecture.

### Second compartment. *An assembly of people.*

Λαοὶ δ' εἰν ἀγορῇ, *etc.*] “ There was seen a number  
 “ of people in the market-place, and two men disputing  
 “ warmly : the occasion was the payment of a fine for  
 “ a murder, which one affirmed before the people he  
 “ had paid, the other denied to have received ; both de-  
 “ manded, that the affair should be determined by the  
 “ judgment of an arbiter ; the acclamations of the mul-  
 “ titude favoured sometimes the one party, and some-  
 “ times the other.”

Here is a fine plan for a master-piece of *expression* ; any judge of painting will see our author has chosen that *cause* which, of all others, would give occasion to the greatest variety of expression : the father, the murderer, the witnesses, and the different passions of the assembly, would afford an ample field for this talent even to Raphael himself.

### Third compartment. *The senate.*

Κήρυκες δ' ἄρα λαὸν ἐρέτυον, *etc.*] “ The heralds  
 “ ranged the people in order : the reverend elders were  
 “ seated on seats of polished stone, in the sacred circle ;  
 “ they rose up and declared their judgment, each in his  
 “ turn, with the sceptre in his hand : two talents of  
 “ gold were laid in the middle of the circle, to be given  
 “ to him who should pronounce the most equitable  
 “ judgment.”

The judges are seated in the centre of the picture ; one, who is the principal figure, standing up as speaking, another in an action of rising, as in order to speak : the ground about them a prospect of the forum, filled with auditors and spectators.



Fourth compartment. *A town in war.*

Τὴν δ' ἐτέρην πόλιν, etc.] “The other city was besieged by two glittering armies : they were not agreed whether to sack the town, or divide all the booty of it into two equal parts, to be shared between them : mean time the besieged secretly armed themselves for an ambuscade. Their wives, children, and old men were posted to defend their walls : the warriors marched from the town with Pallas and Mars at their head : the deities were of gold, and had golden armour, by the glory of which they were distinguished above the men, as well as by their superior stature, and more elegant proportions.”

This subject may be thus disposed : the town pretty near the eye, across the whole picture, with the old men on the walls : the chiefs of each army on the foreground : their different opinions for putting the town to the sword, or sparing it on account of the booty, may be expressed by some having their hands on their swords, and looking up to the city, others stopping them, or in an action of persuading against it. Behind, in prospect, the townsmen may be seen going out from the back gates, with the two deities at their head.

Homer here gives a clear instance of what the ancients always practised ; the distinguishing the gods and goddesses by characters of majesty or beauty somewhat superior to nature ; we constantly find this in their statues, and to this the modern masters owe the grand taste in the perfection of their figures.

Fifth compartment. *An ambuscade.*

Οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ ῥ' ἰκανον, etc.] “Being arrived at the river where they designed their ambush, the place where the cattle were watered, they disposed themselves along the banks, covered with their arms : two spies lay at a distance from them observing when the oxen and sheep should come to drink. They came imme-

“diately, followed by two shepherds, who were playing  
 “on their pipes, without any apprehension of their dan-  
 “ger.”

This quiet picture is a kind of repose between the last and the following active pieces. Here is a scene of a river and trees, under which lie the soldiers, next the eye of the spectator; on the farther bank are placed the two spies on one hand, and the flocks and shepherds appear coming at a greater distance on the other.

### Sixth compartment. *The battle.*

Οἱ μὲν τὰ προιδόντες, etc.] “The people of the town  
 “rushed upon them, carried off the oxen and sheep,  
 “and killed the shepherds. The besiegers sitting be-  
 “fore the town, heard the outcry, and mounting their  
 “horses, arrived at the bank of the river; where they  
 “stopped, and encountered each other with their spears.  
 “Discord, tumult, and fate raged in the midst of them.  
 “There might you see cruel Destiny dragging a dead  
 “soldier through the battle; two others she seized a-  
 “live; one of which was mortally wounded; the o-  
 “ther not yet hurt: the garment on her shoulders was  
 “stained with human blood: the figures appeared as  
 “if they lived, moved, and fought, you would think  
 “they really dragged off their dead.”

The sheep and two shepherds lying dead upon the fore-ground. A battle-piece fills the picture. The allegorical figure of the Parca or Destiny is the principal. This had been a noble occasion for such a painter as Rubens, who has, with most happiness and learning, imitated the ancients in these fictitious and symbolical persons.

### Seventh compartment. *Tillage.*

Ἐν δ' ἐτίθει νεῖον μαλακόν, etc.] “The next piece re-  
 “presented a large field, a deep and fruitful soil which  
 “seemed to have been three times plowed; the labourers  
 appear



“ appeared turning their plows on every side. As soon  
 “ as they came to a land’s end, a man presented them a  
 “ bowl of wine ; cheered with this, they turned, and  
 “ worked down a new furrow, desirous to hasten to the  
 “ next land’s end. The field was of gold, but looked,  
 “ black behind the plows, as if it had really been turn-  
 “ ed up ; the surprizing effect of the art of Vulcan.

The plowmen must be represented on the fore-ground in the action of turning at the end of the furrow. The invention of Homer is not content with barely putting down the figures, but enlivens them prodigiously with some remarkable circumstance : the giving a cup of wine to the plowmen must occasion a fine expression in the faces..

### Eighth compartment. *The harvest.*

[Εν δ' ἐρίβει τέμενος, etc.] “ Next he represented a  
 “ field of corn, in which the reapers worked with sharp  
 “ sickles in their hands ; the corn fell thick along the  
 “ furrows in equal rows : three binders were employed  
 “ in making up the sheaves : the boys attending them,  
 “ gathered up the loose swarths, and carried them in their  
 “ arms to be bound : the lord of the field standing in  
 “ the midst of the heaps, with a sceptre in his hand, re-  
 “ joices in silence : his officers, at a distance, prepare a  
 “ feast under the shade of an oak, and hold an ox ready  
 “ to be sacrificed ; while the women mix the flower of  
 “ wheat for the reapers supper.”

The reapers on the fore-ground, with their faces towards the spectators ; the gatherers behind, and the children on the farther ground. The master of the field, who is the chief figure, may be set in the middle of the picture with a strong light upon him, in the action of directing and pointing with his sceptre : the oak, with the servants under it, the sacrifice, *etc.* on a distant ground, would all together make a beautiful groupe of great variety.

Ninth compartment. *The vintage.*

Ἐν δ' ἐτιθεῖσα φυλῆσι, etc.] "He then engraved a vineyard loaden with its grapes: the vineyard was gold, but the grapes black, and the props of them silver. A trench of a dark metal, and a palisade of tin encompassed the whole vineyard. There was one path in it, by which the labourers in the vineyard passed: young men and maids carried the fruit in woven baskets: in the middle of them a youth played on the lyre, and charmed them with his tender voice, as he sung to the strings (or as he sung the song of Linus:) the rest striking the ground with their feet in exact time, followed him in a dance, and accompanied his voice with their own."

The vintage scarce needs to be painted in any colours but Homer's. The youths and maids toward the eye, as coming out of the vineyard: the inclosure, pales, gate, *etc.* on the fore-ground. There is something inexpressibly *riant* in this piece, above all the rest.

Tenth compartment. *Animals.*

Ἐν δ' ἀγέλην ποίησε βοῶν, etc.] "He graved a herd of oxen marching with their heads erected: these oxen, inlaid with gold and tin, seemed to bellow as they quitted their stall, and run in haste to the meadows, through which a rapid river rolled with resounding streams amongst the rushes: four herdsmen of gold attended them, followed by nine large dogs. Two terrible lions seized a bull by the throat, who roared as they dragged him along; the dogs and the herdsmen ran to his rescue, but the lions having torn the bull, devoured his entrails, and drank his blood. The herdsmen came up with their dogs, and heartened them in vain; they durst not attack the lions, but standing at some distance, barked at them, and shunned them."

We have next a fine piece of animals, tame and sa-

vage : but what is remarkable, is, that these animals are not coldly brought in to be gazed upon : the herds, dogs, and lions are put into action, enough to exercise the warmth and spirit of Rubens, or the great taste of Julio Romano.

The lions may be next the eye, one holding the bull by the throat, the other tearing out his entrails : a herdsman or two heartening the dogs : all these on the fore-ground. On the second ground another groupe of oxen, that seem to have been gone before, tossing their heads and running ; other herdsmen and dogs after them : and beyond them, a prospect of the river.

### Eleventh compartment. *Sheep.*

Ἐν δὲ νομῶν, etc.] “ The divine artist then engraved a large flock of white sheep feeding along a beautiful valley. Innumerable folds, cottages, and inclosed shelters, were scattered through the prospect.”

This is an intire landscape without human figures, an image of nature solitary and undisturbed : the deepest repose and tranquillity is that which distinguishes it from the others.

### Twelfth compartment. *The dance.*

Ἐν δὲ χορῶν, etc.] “ The skilful Vulcan then designed the figure and various motions of a dance, like that which Dædalus of old contrived in Gnossus for the fair Ariadne. There the young men and maidens danced hand in hand ; the maidens were dressed in linen garments, the men in rich and shining stuffs : the maids had flowery crowns on their heads ; the men had swords of gold hanging from their sides in belts of silver. Here they seem to run in a ring with active feet, as swiftly as a wheel runs round when tried by the hand of the potter. There, they appeared to move in many figures, and sometimes to meet, sometimes to wind from each other. A multitude of spectators stood round, delighted with the dance. In the mid-

“dle two nimble tumblers exercised themselves in feats  
“of activity, while the song was carried on by the  
“whole circle.”

This picture includes the greatest number of persons: Homer himself has grouped them and marked the manner of the composition. This piece would excel in the different *airs of beauty* which might be given to the young men and women, and the graceful attitudes in the various manners of dancing; on which account the subject might be fit for Guido, or perhaps could be no where better executed than in our own country.

### *The BORDER of the SHIELD.*

Ἐν δ' ἐτίθει ποταμοιο, etc.] “Then lastly, he represented the rapid course of the great ocean, which he made to roll its waves round the extremity of the whole circumference.”

This, as has been said before, was only the frame to the whole shield, and is therefore but slightly touched upon, without any mention of particular objects.

I ought not to end this essay, without vindicating myself from the vanity of treating of an art, which I love so much better than I understand: but I have been very careful to consult both the best performers and judges in painting. I cannot neglect this occasion of saying, how happy I think myself in the favour of the most distinguished masters of that art. Sir Godfrey Kneller in particular allows me to tell the world, that he intirely agrees with my sentiments on this subject: and I cannot help wishing that he who gives this testimony to Homer would ennoble so great a design by his own execution of it. Vulcan never wrought for Thetis with more readiness and affection, than Sir Godfrey has done for me: and so admirable a picture of the whole universe could not be a more agreeable present than he has obliged me with, in the portraits of some of those persons, who are to me the dearest objects in it.

*The End of the third Volume.*







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